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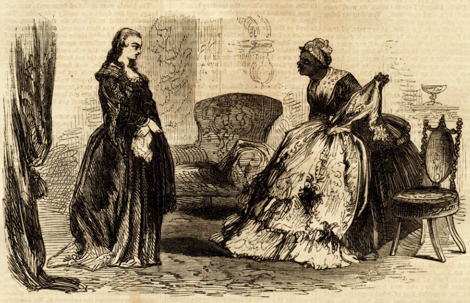

EADY AND ADRIENNE.

WALKS IN THE WOODS:

(A LEDGER EDITORIAL IN A "SINGING ROBE.")

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Dead on their frozen stalks are Autumn's flowers,
But all the woods have burst to brilliant bloom.
With glowing wreaths the paths are over-arched;
And through the silent spaces drifting on,
The glorified thick leaves of chestnut, ash,
Maple and oak, in every rainbow hue,
Fall fluttering to the ground.
O who the loss
Of summer's roses would lament, could he
Forever wander at his own grand will
Mid Autumn's beauty and magnificence?
Nature in all the vigor of her prime,
And boundless bloom, hath naught so glorious
As this bright efflorescence of decay!

How sweetly odorous all the mazy woods!
The leaves, death-stricken, seem embalmed
By Nature in her tenderness for all
Her beautiful children gone.
But listen now:
That feathered sprite, the mottled woodpecker,
Makes every tree, for you, a mellow drum:
A murmurous, soothing sound the pigeons make
At their large feast of luscious acorns spread
By liberal Autumn, and the squirrels hold
A jubilee.
Where can the pensive soul
Find happier place for thought than Autumn's Fane?
It is for self-communing grandly built,
And deepest meditation. Let us tread
These solemn cloisters and majestic aisles
In large-eyed wonder and hushed reverence,
And their Almighty Architect adore
As we behold them clothed as with the pomp
Of radiant sunsets in the Autumn of the year.

THE WHITE TERROR.

ELIZA A. DUPUY

AUTHOR OF "THE LOST DEEDS," "THE MYSTERIOUS MARRIAGE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

Adrienne followed Eady across a wide gallery, and paused before the door of the lady's tower, while the negress selected a key from the large bunch she carried in her pocket. She thrust it into the disused lock with a harsh, grating sound, and after several efforts succeeded in turning it.

The door at length unclosed, and they stepped into an apartment three sides of which were octagonal, while the fourth one was filled up by a large armoire built against the wall, and an alcove in a line with it filled up by a bed. The furniture was of the same style as that in the lower room, covered with faded damask, though here it had once been rose-colored.

The alcove was draped with lace curtains, and above them was a cornice of carved work representing a basket of flowers upheld by a pair of dimpled Loves which seemed to float above, sustained by their expanded wings. A large mirror, extending from the floor to the ceiling, occupied the space between two of the windows, and opposite to this was placed a dressing-stand, with an oval glass which enabled the occupant of the room to view her whole figure when in full toilette.

A few pictures were upon the walls, mostly representing mountain scenery, which had probably been preferred from the contrast they afforded to the flat country in which Madame Lecour had passed the latter portion of her life. A small carpet, an article of great luxury at that time in the colony, lay in front of the small fire-place; it had been woven in France, in imitation of Gobelin tapestry, and the arabesque pattern, in which the most gorgeous colors were contrasted, was now faded and worn. Heavy curtains of rose damask were held back by carved water lilies, and the new occupant looked with surprise on a degree of elegance she had not expected to find in so new a country. She expressed something of this, and Eady pompously replied:

"De 'plenishin' o' dis 'partment were brung from France when de mistis were a rich young heiress. She chose 'em in Paris herself, an' a vessel what b'longed to her father brung her back from school, wid all de fine things she bought wi' de money dat neber was put away when *she* wanted to spend it."

"Did you live with your mistress in those days, Eady?"

"No, 'deed, I wishes I had. I b'longs to the marster, sure 'nuff, for he got me an' my ole man arter he married de rich Madame Mendon. I only came to live wi' her jest afore she departed."

"Departed? where to?" asked Adrienne. "If she died, you use a strange form of speech."

"Hi! sure 'nuff, now, you ain't usen to nigger talk, or you'd a' know'd dat I meant to tell you of her death. Yes, de angels came for her, but dey carn't hold her so fast but she can come to me sometimes."

The old woman ominously shook her head, and Adrienne apprehensively asked:

"Do you really believe that the spirits of the dead can return to us? Oh, do not tell me that this room is haunted by its former occupant, for I shall fear to remain in it."

"Oh, Lor', chile! you needn't get so white, like, for de White Terror don' come in *here*. She had too much trouble in dis room to make her willin' to come back to it."

"The White Terror," repeated Adrienne, faintly. "Then my grandfather was not jesting, and the old house is really haunted."

"Don't get frighted, young mistis, caze she aint goin' to come arter *you*. It's de *ole* house she walks in, for she lived thar in happiness wi' de husban' her father married her to. Dis was her 'partment when she was married to your grandfather, and de life she led wi' *him* wasn't sich as would make her come back to de places where dey was together."

"Did he treat her badly?" asked Adrienne, with an irrepressible desire to learn something more of Madame Lecour's history. Eady shook her head, and replied almost in a whisper:

"Take my 'vice, young mistis, an' don' ax no questions 'bout your gran'pa. He mought find it out, an' you 'member what he said to you jes' now."

The young girl colored at this rebuff, and Eady crossed the room and unclosed the wide doors of the armoire. On one side it was filled with shelves, but the opposite one, in place of having the usual supply of hooks for suspending ladies' dresses, revealed a plain door with a small steel knob communicating with a spring. The old woman touched this, and the door flew back, revealing a dark, narrow stairway, leading evidently to the room below.

"It were a whim o' de mistis dat de steps shouldn't be seen, an' she thought dis contrivance very clever. Dere is a slidin' pannel in de wall o' de lower room, wi' a knob like dis one, an' you can allers get through when you choose to go down stairs. In mistis's day a lamp used to hang dere, but you'll have to get along widout dat 'commodation, caze de marster keeps so much light hisself, he don't 'low much to other people."

Adrienne looked into the dark abyss that seemed to open at her feet, and with a shiver said:

"I believe I shall keep this doorway closed, and use the staircase leading from the gallery. I would rather walk in the open air than to go through such a dreary, musty-looking place as that."

"I 'spect you'll change your mind afore you've bin here very long," replied Eady, significantly. "Your gran'pa aint fond o' new faces, an' *some* days he'll hardly let *me* come anigh him to bring him his vittles, fond as he is of eatin' of 'em. I stren'ously 'vise you to keep out o' his way when he ramps an' rages 'round like a mad creetur, as he sometimes does."

"Good heavens! is Mr. Lecour really subject to attacks of madness? If he is, I shall scarcely feel safe beneath the same roof with him."

Eady impressively replied:

"Ef you has any other place to go to, I'd 'vise you not to stay in dis ole dismal house, caze you'll die o' de blue debbils ef you 'scapes de marster's furies, though I don't 'zactly consider him out o' his mind, only a leetle cracked in de upper story, an' de green stuff he chews makes him kind o' wild sometimes, an' he does strange things."

Adrienne listened to this account with a sinking heart. Here she must remain, for she had no other refuge on earth. She was friendless, homeless, and could claim no other shelter beside that afforded her by this singular old man. She felt how impossible it was for her to claim the hospitality of Madame Crozat, even if forced to leave her present asylum, for she foresaw that Adolphe would speedily ask her to become his wife. Before they parted, Madame Crozat had broadly hinted her son's passion, and her own willingness to waive all considerations of fortune, and accept her as Mr. Mendon's choice.

The young girl felt grateful for their kindness, yet there seemed to her to be a motive lurking behind it which she was unable to fathom. Attracted first by the beauty and isolated position of Mademoiselle Durand, on ascertaining her connexion with Mr. Lecour, both mother and son seemed to be inspired with the warmest interest in her future. They repeatedly questioned her about her early recollections, and the circumstances which led to her being placed in a convent to be educated. Adrienne could only remember that her earliest associations were connected with the convent, for she had been placed under the care of the Superior before her perceptive faculties came into exercise.

She had always been told that her mother died when she was in her third year, and it was the wish of her only surviving relative that she should assume the veil when she attained a suitable age.

Her new friends listened with absorbing interest. They consulted together, discussed probabilities known to themselves, and finally insisted that the young traveller should not throw herself on the protection of Mr. Lecour, but accompany Madame Crozat to her own residence. Thus her future fate would be at their disposal, but the refusal of Adrienne to accept the proffered hospitality frustrated their well-laid plans.

Had no other attachment existed, Adrienne would have felt it to be impossible to give her hand to Mr. Mendon. He was nearly twice her age, and by no means attractive to her. She respected him, felt grateful to him for the services he rendered her, but in her estimation love was something too precious to be given in exchange for lands and gold. He had thought to tempt her with the description of the stately home in which he had dwelt with his first wife in the island of Jamaica, of which she was a native, and hinted that he could afford to keep a second choice, even if destitute of fortune herself, in the same splendor that had surrounded his lost Sylvie. Then he dwelt on the secluded and monotonous existence she must lead with her eccentric grandfather, but Adrienne listened unmoved in her purpose; she was free from conventual restraint, and she could bear a few months of seclusion, with the buoyant hope in her young heart that her lover would remain true to her; she would win a place in the heart of the old man, whose life she hoped to brighten, and in time he must lend a favorable ear to their attachment. From his great wealth he would portion her, and in good time they could be united.

These were but the dreams of hopeful youth, and already she beheld them vanishing before the grim reality presented by Mr. Lecour's appearance and manner. All that now remained, was to bear the cross which she had voluntarily assumed with as much patience as she could summon to her assistance. She would endeavor to have faith in the future, for a few months might open to her a pathway in which she could walk with Victor by her side, and contented love within her heart.

Thus dreaming, she followed Eady from side to side, as she opened drawers and cabinets, and showed her the elegant articles which had been collected by her mistress; and carefully stored away by herself lest dust or damp should injure them. Among them were exquisite china ornaments, parian statuettes representing miniature copies of the most celebrated statues of antiquity, and several cameos, carved with delicate skill. A case filled with a collection of medals, and a portfolio containing a number of drawings made by Madame Lecour herself, were deeply interesting to Adrienne, as affording some insight in the pursuits of her predecessor in that apartment.

"Now I'm goin' to show you somethin' real grand," said Eady. "But you mus' neber hint to my marster dat you's seen 'em; caze he'd fairly take my head off for lettin' on dat sich valerable things is kep' in de ole house."

"Then it will be better perhaps, for you not to show them at all," suggested Adrienne.

The old woman sturdily replied:

"It won't do any harm as I knows on, an' you may as well see 'em as not. Fact is, I likes to look at 'em once in a while myself, for dey's mortal fine."

With great solemnity, she looked over a bunch of keys, and selecting one of a peculiar shape, inserted it in the lock of an antique, inlaid cabinet. The doors unclosed and revealed several jewel cases with their lids lifted, and their glittering contents exposed to view. A magnificent parure of diamonds flashed back the light of day; a garniture of pearls lay upon the dark velvet of the next; but the most attractive was a set of opals, which seemed to drink in the light of the sun as it streamed upon them, and momentarily kindle to a deeper splendor as their fiery hearts received new fuel from the day beams.

The young girl eagerly stretched forth her hand to lift them from their bed, but the negress withheld her.

"No, young mistis, you mustn't tech 'em, for de madame placed 'em dere wi' her own han' de day afore.—Well—nebber mind when—but dey's jes' as she laid 'em down out o' her white fingers, an' it seems to me dat I can see her lily han' flitterin' over 'em as I seen her put 'em away for de las' time."

"Where! I see nothing," said Adrienne with a shiver, for she was completely unnerved, and took the assertion of the old woman as a literal fact.

"Oh chile, I jes' sees it in my mem'ry, dat's all."

Adrienne drew a long breath, and pointing to a deep drawer in the lower part of the cabinet, asked:

"What is kept in there?"

Eady replied by unlocking the drawer, and displaying folds of silk and lace, yellowed by time, and want of use. She took out a bridal robe, and held it up.

"Dis were worn wi' de diamon's, when de Madame married to please her father. Dere was gran' doin's den, for de ole man had sot his heart on de match, an' at las' 'suaded her inter it."

It was point lace, looped with orange blossoms, now crushed and faded. Eady then took out a plain white silk with no ornament whatever—she went on:

"She wore dis one when she give her hand to my present marster, an' I's bin tole dat de fire stones yonder was all de ornymen' she put on. Hi! but dey showed de fiery trials she had to pass through wi' him."

There was also a third dress of plain muslin, with only a few knots of white ribbon. Eady dubiously surveyed it, as she said:

"I never knowed what dis were worn for, but I reckin de pearls went wi' it; for I's seen de Madame shed tears 'nuff over it to make a bushel o' pearls. Dere was some mighty sorrowful 'membrances b'longing to dis dress, I's sure, but I never knowed what dey was."

"And what is in that small yellow bundle?" asked the inquisitive stranger, who had become vividly interested in all these details.

"Ah *dat* have always been a mistry to me. Dey's baby's close—a complete suit on 'em, wi' lace an' all kinds o' dainty work; but to my knowledge de mistis never had a child o' her own. I don' 'no why she'd keep de close b'longin' to other people's chil'ren 'mong her most precious persessions. Yes—dat am a mistry, I can't git at no how."

With a feeling of eager interest for which she could not account, Adrienne lifted the bundle and unrolled it. A complete suit of infant's wearing apparel appeared, which had evidently been made at home, and the loving care with which it had been prepared was evinced by the dainty needle work, and fine materials used.

With a strange thrill of emotion, the young girl looked over these tiny memorials of a young mother's care and tenderness, and warm tears sprang to her eyes. A whole history of maternal hope, joy, and final anguish, arose before her fancy. As she rolled them together again, a strange, electric shiver ran through her frame, thrilling every fibre of her being, and arousing that latent prescience which was the gift of her impressible organization. In spite of her efforts to keep them open, her eye-lids drooped, and a singular trance fell upon her: a hallucination she then thought it.

She beheld as in a vision, two women kneeling beside the couch of a sleeping infant. Both were weeping, and one was clad in deep mourning. Their hands were clasped together, but suddenly the one who seemed in the greatest distress, drew the hand of her companion over the heart of the child, and seemed to be exacting from her a promise. With many tears and caresses, she lifted the slumbering babe, and placing it in the arms of her companion, then buried her own face in the pillow on which the dear head had lately rested, her whole frame seeming convulsed with anguish.

The voice of Eady aroused Adrienne from her momentary trance, and her wandering senses returned to find the bundle plucked from her grasp, and the old woman in a great fright exclaiming:

"I clar to Moses! young mistis, I hope you aint subjec' to fits, for I thought you was a fallin' inter one over these here ole yaller duds. What makes you look so white? Do the musk I put 'mong 'em make you sick?"

"Perhaps it was that which so singularly affected me," she replied, anxious to find some natural cause for the sudden glimpse of an inner power hitherto unsuspected by herself. Adrienne had often been told of persons possessed by evil spirits, and she had given implicit credence to the tales whose truth was vouched for by those in whose truth and piety she possessed entire confidence. With sudden fear, she asked herself if she had become one of those accursed ones, by forsaking the holy home in which she had been carefully reared? The mere thought filled her with superstitious dread, and she felt a sense of relief when Eady closed the cabinet, and said:

"I spec' you is tired now, an' would like to res' a bit. De room is damp an' cool, an' I'll sen' my ole man up wi' a armfull o' wood to make you a fire."

"Thank you; but it is a long time till night, and I had rather go with you to your part of the house."

The old woman looked keenly at her.

"I hope you aint afraid to stay up stairs in broad daylight chile, caze ef you is, de Lor' only knows what is to become o' you in de long dark nights."

"I am not afraid—I am only restless, and I have a natural desire to explore the house in which I am to live in future."

"I'm sorry for you, honey, ef you has to stay here long. It's bad 'nuff for Pierre an' me, widout sich as you comin' to dis mouldy ole place. We b'longs to de marster, an' mus' do his will, but sich a bloomin' young creetur' as you, ought to have somebody what is willin' to take you out o' dis, an' make you happy in yer own way."

A faint smile crept to Adrienne's lip as the soothing thought came that there *was* one who would leave no means untried to save her from a prolonged residence beneath that banned roof. She did not choose to take Eady into her confidence, and merely saying:

"I must content myself here for the present," she motioned to the old woman to precede her down the dark and unknown staircase. It proved to be sufficiently wide and easy of descent, and the spring which held the panel below, at once obeyed the touch that had so long been familiar with it. At the request of Eady, the young girl tried it herself and found that she could easily manage it.

A statue of Proserpine was placed in front of the opening, and slightly stooping, Adrienne stepped into the lower apartment.

Glad to have found a listener, the garrulous old woman chattered on:

"Dere's bin gran' doin's in dis house, but it were afore my time: I's only hearn tell on 'em, for I were brung here only jes' afore de Madame went from among us. Oh, dat were a sad day for us all. But what *is* de matter of you? I 'clar to Moses, you 'm gwine off agin in a dead faint."

As Adrienne crossed the dark stain upon the floor, that sharp thrill again pierced her being, and she shrank aside, faint and pale, with a sickening dread she had no power to conquer. She pointed to the floor, and whispered:

"What is it? What caused that spot?"

The negress turned of an ashen hue, and she visibly trembled, though she affected to laugh, as she replied:

"Hi! you makin' all' dis pother 'bout a cup o' spilled coffee dat I forgot to wash off de floor. You mustn't be fanciful, young mistis, or you'll go wild in dis queer ole place."

"I believe I am half wild now—let us get out of this room, there is a feeling of death in it. I seem to behold a struggle—a blow—and, oh, there is blood—blood upon the blade!"

The old woman looked wildly upon the fixed pallid features, the heavy drooping eyelids, and, seizing her hand, dragged her from the spot.

With a shudder the illusion passed away, and Adrienne, obeying the impulse of the negress's hand, followed her from the room. Eady gazed at her with a terrified expression. What manner of person was this? a girl seemingly gifted with second sight had entered this house, so jealously guarded from the prying eyes of the world, that its dreary secrets might be kept from its knowledge.

Had she been sent hither to unvail them? to bring retribution upon the old tyrant, who lived in his tower as a tiger in his den, for the crimes he had perpetrated? Eady, with an untutored sense of justice, hoped it might be so, for she knew that which cried aloud for vengeance. She dared not speak herself, for she feared her master above all creatures, but she lived in the hope that one would yet be found who would possess the courage to denounce him. She sighed as she remembered that this young girl could scarcely be that accuser, for she was of his own race, and therefore bound to protect him against the consequences of his evil deeds as far as lay in her power; and she dismissed the dawning hope that right might be done through the medium of the new inmate of Bellair.

Adrienne shivered with fear as the consciousness of this newly developed power dawned within her. She asked herself for what purpose it had been given? Was it for evil or for good? She tried to reason with herself—to prove to her own satisfaction that the uncertainty of her reception by Mr. Lecour, which had so long lain as an incubus upon her mind—the excitement which had deprived her of appetite, and the dispiriting events of the day—had given a morbid tendency to her mind. With a good night's rest her nerves would be restored to a healthy and natural equilibrium, and she would then clearly see that an excitable imagination was only playing fantastic tricks upon her, which her native good sense must enable her to correct.

Resolute to banish the phantasm which had so thrilled her inmost being, Adrienne followed Eady across the lower gallery into the body of the house. It did not seem to have been built on any architectural plan, but as if room after room had been added as the need for them arose. Such, in fact, had been the origin of the old manorial residence on which it had been modelled: for in his desire to reproduce the home of his boyhood, Mr. Montreuil had ignored convenience. With such materials as were at his command, he had built a chateau with winding corridors, badly ventilated rooms, and antique towers; but the wood and plaster he had been forced to use, in place of stone and cement, were already falling to decay, and wearing as venerable an appearance as a castle of the feudal ages might have done in a climate less damp and variable.

Eady unlocked door after door, revealing sumptuous furniture, now faded and musty with disuse; but the absence of dust showed that the old woman was not unfaithful to the trust reposed in her. Adrienne walked through them as one in a vague dream, and she scarcely heard the incessant chattering of the old woman. She presently asked:

"Why did Madame Lecour give up these fine rooms, and prefer the tower to live in?"

Eady shook her head:

"She tuck a dislike to dese 'partments arter de death o' her husbin an' father. She were a fanciful kind o' lady, an' as she had plenty o' money, she did as she pleased. But in *her* day de great house wasn't given up to de vermin—she filled it with company, an' sich junketin', frolickin' an' dancin' never was hearn tell of in dis country. De Madame was a mighty gay widder, I b'lieves."

"And how did she live after her union with Mr. Lecour?"

"Ah, chile, as soon as he came in possession all *dat* was put a stop to. I's bin tole he allers was a strange man; but how he persuaded a gay young widder like de Madame to marry him, nobody could understan': de servants thought he bewitched her; you know, honey, dat niggers is fools 'nuff to b'lieve in sich things. Howsomedever, let dat be as 'twill, she married him, though all her frien's was scandalized 'bout it, an' de Mendon family threatened to prove dat she couldn't be in her right mind. You see, de estate was hern, to do as she pleased wi', an' dey didn't want her to marry agin."

"Had they any particular objection to Mr. Lecour?"

"Well, I reckin dey had, for he were a stranger in dese parts, an' too ole by twenty year for de Madame. But dey says, de oddest part of de whole matter was, dat de Madame seemed unhappy in de thought o' marryin' him, yet she 'fended all her frien's by doin' so."

"It is indeed a singular history; and they were not happy together, I am afraid."

"Happy? Oh, Lor'! I don't 'spec' she ever thought o' sich a thing wi' *him*. He shet up de house, sold her carriage, an' put de hosses in the plow; 'fended everybody she cared for, an' when she were left to his mercy, he 'mured hisself in one tower, an' made her live in de other. She bore it, you see, caze she had braved de anger o' all her frien's to marry him, an' she had a sperrit o' her own, dat made her willin' to bear de consequins widout axin' for help. De marster sent all de ole servants away, an' bought my ole man an' me, wi' our dumb chile, what didn't live very long arterwards."

"And you were with Madame Lecour when she died?" asked Adrienne.

A singular expression flitted over the face of the old woman, and she replied:

"Oh, aye—sartinly—sartinly—I were wi' her, for I loved her—'deed I did, for she were a sweet lady, an' what seems sing'ler to me, you looks mightily like her."

"So Mr. Mendon thought," said Adrienne, musingly. "Yet I am in no way related to her. But why are you turning from this door? Let us enter this room, if you please."

"It aint no use, for dey's only lumber rooms, an' you'd only git your black dress siled wi' de dust. Dere's nothin' in thar but a passel o' ole trash dat aint werf lookin' at."

Adrienne looked steadily at her; she said:

"Access is gained to the highest floor through this door, I believe?"

"Yes, dat am a fac', but dey's only lumber rooms up dere."

"Something tells me that you are deceiving me, for purposes of your own; but I will not insist on seeing those rooms at present. The time will come when I shall enter them with Mr. Lecour's consent."

The old woman's voice trembled, as she asked:

"Is you *possessed*, young mistis, dat you talk in dis circumambular style? I b'lieve I'll cross myself to banish the evil one from us bofe."

Adrienne faintly smiled; but she, too, made the sign of the cross in the air, and turned away without further reference to the unopened rooms. She was glad to follow Eady into the open air, and shake off the gloomy impression made by the solitude and desolation amid which she had been wandering.

Eady opened an outer door, which led into a vegetable garden kept in order by the labor of Pierre. Her own domicile fronted this, and near it bloomed a few hardy flowers of such gaudy hues as are most prized by the race to which she belonged. A poultry yard was in the rear of the cabin, swarming with chickens, turkeys and geese. These Eady displayed with great pride, commenting upon their different characteristics with much shrewdness.

"Chickens am giddy things, young mistis; what never thinks o' nothin' hap'nin' to 'em, tell dey's had de head wrung off, an' den dey flutters 'bout in a state o' surprise tell de blood's mos' lef de body."

Adrienne shivered, and vaguely muttered:

"I would give much to know if consciousness is left in the body while these convulsions go on. Did the victims of the guillotine feel the pangs of mortality after the knife had done its work?"

"Ask *him*, an' mayhap he can tell you," said Eady, pointing significantly in the direction of Mr. Lecour's tower. "Ef you could see what is in dat room under his'n, you'd think dey could."

"What is in there then?"

"Only picters o' people, but dey's dreffle to look at; all on 'em has had dere heads cut off, an' you can see whar de knife went 'roun'. He don' know dat I's seen 'em, but I has. But, 'bout dese fools; you know people allers says 'what a goose' when any one have done some mighty silly thing; but it's my 'pinion dey orter say what a turkey, for dey's sich born naturals dey can't take care o' dere own young ones, but carries 'em inter all manner o' on'countable places. But de geese—lor! love you, chile, dey is as wise as white folks; dey allers has a guard sot when dey goes to sleep, an' dey shows de judgment o' humans sometimes—I clar to Moses dey does."

Addrienne half smiled, as she replied:

"Your observation only confirms what history tells us of their sagacity. A great city was once saved by their cackling, though I do not think it is very plesant music. But pray tell me about this room of Mr. Lecour's. If you can look into it, why cannot I also do so? Has he forbidden it to every one?"

"I reckin he have, an' ef he knew dat I had peeped inter it, I don' know what de consequins mought be. I'm talkin' to you mighty free, chile, but I feels somehow, dat you'll not make a harmful use o' my gabble. I don't often find any one to talk wi', 'cept dat ole husbin' o' mine, an' he's kind o' stupid, an' goes to sleep half de time when I'm demystatin' my mos' 'lectable idees."

"You need not fear my indiscretion. I feel too much in awe of Mr. Lecour myself to betray any of your confidences to him. I thought my grandfather lived on a large plantation.

"So he do; but de great house is shet off from de place by de trees dat has been 'lowed to grow so thick around it. De quarter is a mile off, an' de oberseer lives thar. He comes over once a month to make his 'port to marster."

"And do you never visit the people at the quarter?"

"Bless you, no, honey; de marster don't 'low it on no 'count; an' ef any o' de people was to come over here, dey knows dat de bloodhoun' he keeps would be let loose on 'em. I never puts my foot off dis place, 'cept once in a while, to go to de landin' wi' Pierre to git sich things from de sto' as he aint no judge o'."

"Do you not find this life very dreary?"

"You may say dat, honey; but I has Pierre to fuss arter, an' de marster to look to, 'sides de chickens an' things to feed. But what'll *you* do in dis ole den arter you gits settled down, for you won't have a yethly thing to' muse you?"

"Oh, I shall find something to do. I will read, and if I could get a musical instrument I would keep up my practice. I can contrive some kind of employment for myself, be sure of that."

"I hope so, but ef I hearn the soun' o' music in Castle Dismal, I should think de worl' were comin' to a eend sure 'nuff. You'll never bring dat to pass, young mistis."

"I shall make the effort, at any rate. I trust that I may yet be able to bring back some enjoyment to the lonely heart of my poor old grandfather. He has been too long in solitude. I came hither to be his good angel, and I must accomplish my mission. It may be long before I can establish an influence over him, but I trust that I shall eventually succeed in rendering myself useful to him."

Eady shook her head ominously.

"Ah, chile, you is young an' hopeful. You doesn't know as much as *I* knows, or you wouldn't 'spec' much from heabenly mistrations to sich a ole sinner as my marster. But I aint gwine to put de good 'tention out o' yer mine. Jes' do de bes' you can, an' dat is all dat's 'quired o' yethly creeters."

Adrienne smilingly assented to this wise conclusion, and the old chatterbox went on:

"I's done shewed you everythin' now, young mistis, an' I aint got no more time to waste in talkin'. Mebbe you'd better go up to yer own room, an' kinder get usen to its looks afore night comes on. It makes some people narvyus to sleep in a strange place, and young gals is apt to take notions."

CHAPTER VII.

Thus dismissed, Adrienne returned alone through the desolate mansion, and with nerves excited to the highest point of sensibility, she shrank at the echo of her own steps as she flitted through the long and lonely halls. She ran up the staircase and made a momentary pause in front of the door Eady had refused to unclose for her; she was tempted to try the lock, but a sudden fear of what might be found within, deterred her, and with fleet steps she sped down again, and soon gained the door of her tower room.

Carefully closing it behind her, the young girl paused before ascending to her own apartment, to snatch another glance at the vailed portrait. With a tremulous hand she turned aside the curtain, and a ray of sunshine from a half open shutter fell upon the face. She started at the sudden illumination, and fearfully glanced around to see if it proceeded from a natural cause.

The painting represented a woman of mature beauty, wearing a green riding habit, and hat with a dark plume which fell upon her shoulder and mingled with the blonde curls that hung as a golden glory around the white throat. The face was smiling, but it was one which suffering had deeply touched. A sorrow that gnawed the deeper from being concealed, seemed to throw its shadow over the lovely features, and few could long gaze upon that fair face without a vague feeling of tenderness and compassion for the high-bred heiress of lands and gold, who seemed to be in the zenith of fortune and happiness when that picture was taken, yet in whose heart and life had crept the canker of an incurable sorrow.

Adrienne too saw that it was like herself—like what she might become when time and suffering had developed her into perfect womanhood. Now, it was only the vague resemblance of the young bud to the stately flower. After a long and earnest gaze into the deep sad eyes, Adrienne dropped the curtain, with the exclamation:

"How strange! I seem to myself to belong more to *her*, than to the terrible old man up stairs."

In passing to the recess in which was the sliding panel, Adrienne took especial care not to walk over the stain upon the floor; but even with this precaution, she could not repress the shudder that thrilled her sensitive frame, and she muttered:

"It *is* blood! I feel it—I know it; though the old woman declared it was only a coffee stain."

The spring readily yielded to her touch, and she stood within the darkened stairway. With the unutterable dread that something might impede her steps, she groped her way upward, and finally reached the upper floor. She glanced around the room half fearfully, for all that had happened that day contributed to fill her mind with superstitious dread, and with a sigh of relief, she threw herself into a large chair which was placed near one of the windows.

The sash had been raised, for Eady kept the apartments under her charge scrupulously aired, and Adrienne unbolted the shutter, that she might obtain a glimpse of the scene without. A magnificent oak, with long, trailing wreaths of moss hanging in picturesque festoons, grew just in front of the window, completely concealing the country beyond. The heart of the desolate stranger shrank within her, when she thought that this dreary house, with its strange inmates, was henceforth to be her home.

Adrienne had parted from her lover, in the sanguine belief that she would find peace and happiness under the protection of Mr. Lecour. Trustful and affectionate by nature, she had never doubted her power ultimately to win a place in his heart, and induce him to endow her with sufficient fortune to render possible her union with her lover. This hope had sustained her courage amid all she had gone through to reach his home, but now it had perished before the miserable realities of the difficult position in which she was placed. She sat down with a feeling of utter forlornness and abandonment, and wept such tears as youth is seldom called upon to shed.

The sound of lumbering footsteps upon the stairs aroused her from the indulgence of her feelings, and she gazed with dilating eyes and half-parted lips upon the open door, expecting some goblin dire to make its appearance through it. With a sensation of intense relief, she saw a black face, ugly enough for a goblin, but with a human expression of pleasure at her presence there, and old Pierre came in, bearing a bundle of wood, with which he proceeded to light a fire from a few coals he carried in an iron pan.

With strangers, Pierre was as silent as his wife was talkative, and he hovered over the blaze he soon created, like a dark gnome from some central earth-fire, from which he had filched the materials for this; but he spoke not a syllable to the young girl, whose advent among them had been a delightful surprise to him.

Adrienne thanked him gratefully for his attention to her comfort, and the old negro's tongue was at once unloosed. He sententiously replied:

"It's my bizness to make de fires, mistis, an' it's my pleasure to make one for sich a nice-lookin' young lady as you is. I'll allers keep you a good supply o' wood, an' den you kin keep your fire a burnin' through all de dark hours. You'll find dat a comfort, I reckin, in dis strange house. Now I mus' ten' to marster's fire, an' ef you'll let me through de door on de gal'ry, I sha'n't have to come up de dark stairs and scare you agin."

Adrienne blushed faintly at his accurate interpretation of her feelings, and replied, apologetically:

"Everything here is so strange to me that every sound startles me. I shall overcome this feeling in a few days, and I hope you will not think that I am afraid of you."

"Oh no, Mam'selle, I aint sightly to look at, I know very well, but ole Pierre's face have never got to be fearsome to any one yit. Leastways shall it be to you, for you looks like some o' de ole stock, sure enuff; an' your voice sounds mighty familiar in de ole house."

"And yet I am not of their blood," thought Adrienne, "but an interloper, who is unwelcome to him who now claims the mastery here."

She unlocked the outer door, again gracefully thanked him for his attention to her wants, and turned to the more cheerful-looking room with emotions of gratitude to this poor old creature, for the kindly sympathy he had shown for her loneliness.

"My own blood treats me as an alien," was her bitter thought, "while this untutored menial can feel compassion for my isolated and forlorn position."

The fire leaped and flashed up the chimney, and the quaintly-carved furniture glittered in its beams. Adrienne began to feel less nervous, and by the time Eady came up with her tea, she had made herself quite comfortable in her new quarters. The old woman stayed but a few moments, as her master was waiting for his supper, which she bore upon the same waiter. Adrienne was glad to drink the tea, and then occupy herself with a book which Mr. Lecour was considerate enough to send in to her. As Eady finally withdrew her head from the door, she warningly said:

"Don't you come out o' yer room, nor take no notice of any noises you may hear, young mistis, caze it may be wuss for you den you may think, ef de marster were to come 'cross you in one o' his tantrums. He cuts up mightily some nights, and he is in one o' his spells now."

At the sound of Mr. Lecour's voice she abruptly closed the door and went to him. Pierre brought up a supply of wood for the night, and a candle, which he advised her to economize as much as possible, as his master did not permit many to be burned by any one in his establishment except himself.

With a heavy sinking of the heart, the young stranger listened to his departing footsteps as they clattered down the staircase, and she tried to combat the sense of loneliness by the thought that the length of the gallery only separated her from her grandfather; and stern as he was, should the nightmare of fear come upon her, she would overcome her dread of offending him, and fly to him for companionship.

Later in the evening Eady again came quietly up, bearing the valise of Adrienne, and stayed long enough to prepare the bed for its new occupant. Reiterating her cautions, the old woman at length disappeared for the night, and Adrienne was left to solitude.

After exchanging her black robe for a dressing gown, she drew up the large chair in front of the fire and sat down to contemplate the miniature of Victor Duvernay, which she wore next her heart, concealed in a small golden case. A touch upon a spring revealed a dark, nobly handsome face, surrounded by a waving mass of jet black hair. Certain that no intrusive eyes could behold her, the young girl pressed the senseless ivory to her lips and heart, and murmured words of tender devotion which she would scarcely have been willing to express to the original. She fell into a dreamy reverie, and sinking in the depths of her luxurious chair, she felt a sense of repose, after the varied excitements of the day, stealing over both mind and body.

She slept, at first lightly and fitfully, but gradually her senses more deeply steeped themselves in the oblivion of slumber, and the soul flitted away to the weird realm of dreams.

She stood in a dungeon plunged in the blackness of darkness, and groped around in search of an opening that might afford her egress. Suddenly, in the far distance appeared a faint, starry radiance, as if a vista of vast length had been made visible by the luminous object that steadily and rapidly approached her. As it advanced it grew in size and brilliancy, until it became impossible to fix the dazzled vision upon it.

As the dreamer cast down her eyes to avoid the oppressive glare, a pathway was made clear to her vision, winding among obstructions which appeared insurmountable. A close scrutiny, however, showed that the narrow way wound ingeniously around these obstacles, and the traveller who would patiently pursue the tortuous path must eventually overcome them.

At its terminus, in the far, far distance, stood a misty form, which, from its garments, radiated a softened lustre that seemed divine in its origin. A voice issued from this which distinctly said:

"Mortal, walk with a strong heart in the path appointed thee, for with courage and good intent all things are possible."

Suddenly the star seemed hurled with a great noise toward the mystic figure, and shrieks filled the air. Awaking with a wild start, Adrienne thought she was surely in pandemonium, for cries, stamping, and the deep baying of a bloodhound filled her confused senses with fright.

The fire had gone down, and the room was only illumined by the glowing embers. She threw a few faggots upon the hearth, and by the time they kindled in a blaze, Adrienne recovered sufficient composure to comprehend that the cries proceeded from the room of Mr. Lecour, and the deep baying of the dog ascended from the lower apartment of the tower.

The frantic scenes of the preceding night were evidently being re-enacted, and the lonely stranger listened with a degree of terror that completely unnerved her frame. Remembering his own words and Eady's caution, she sat still and trembling, fearing every moment that the madman would remember her vicinity, and burst into her room.

Suddenly the uproar ceased; the drug had produced its last phase, and the frantic actor in the scene lay supine upon his couch. After a few prolonged wails, the dog also sunk into silence, but the frightened girl sat cowering in her chair, afraid to look around, terrified even by the sound of her own perturbed breathing, which now alone broke the deep silence that fell on everything within the house.

The faint rustle of the breeze, and the answering cry of the nightbirds that lived unharmed among the unpruned trees, were the only interruptions to the profound quiet of the night. Gradually the quick fluttering of her heart subsided, and she gained courage to look around; a sense of chilliness reminded her that she would be better in bed, and in a few moments she was safely ensconced in the antique bedstead in the corner. Eady had loosened the lace curtains, and they fell to the floor in light, filmy folds. By the uncertain flashes of fire-light, Adrienne gazed upon the rich furniture, and mused upon the fair woman whose taste had decorated the apartment, till slumber again fell softly upon her eyelids.

This time she slept dreamlessly for several hours, and then a most extraordinary vision passed before her; with all her efforts, she could only arouse herself to a half consciousness of the singular scene that seemed to be acting in her room, and she found herself wondering if this was another hallucination similar to those which she had experienced on the preceding day.

The fire yet glowed upon the hearth, and by its glimmer, a tall figure was seen in front of the mirror arraying herself in the bridal dresses which Eady had that morning exhibited. She first assumed the white muslin, and decked herself with the pearls. Pale as a snowdrift, with dishevelled hair, white as silver, and an expression of intense melancholy upon her features, she surveyed herself with moans of deep anguish. The pallid lips seemed to unclose, and wail forth the plaintive cry:

"Loved and lost—loved and lost! pearls and tears go together. Off! off! ye freeze me to the marrow!"

The jewels were snatched from neck, arm and brow, and the dress was hastily laid aside. The splendid bridal robe, with its costly lace, and fairy flowers, was then donned, and the magnificent diamonds flashed above her faded brow, and lay in glittering radiance upon her bared neck and arms. Again the voice came hissingly, and scornfully through the set teeth.

"This, for pride, and family peace. They gave me to him, though my heart was with the past; but I played my part well. *He* cannot reproach me when we meet beyond the stars, for I was true to him, if I did not love him. Off, idle gawds! for my dead heart can tell how vain ye are to impart happiness!"

In their turn, these too were torn from her person, and consigned to the receptacles to which they belonged.

Then with a shudder, she lifted the plain white silk, and held it at arm's length, while she surveyed it with an expression of horror.

"Robe of Deijaneira! hateful folds, that glisten to me like the sheen of the serpent that entered the Paradise in which our first parents dwelt, in your turn, I must assume ye for a purpose which I dare not forego."

With evident reluctance, the robe was thrown on, and then the opals were brought forth with an expression of loathing upon her features. She turned them toward the glimmering light, and muttered:

"Fiery hearts, fiery hearts, well do you typify the one for whom they were worn. A consuming anguish did he light in my soul, and his shall not escape from its blighting influence."

When this last toilette was completed, she surveyed herself in the mirror, and then took from a drawer in her dressing-stand a large lace shawl, with which she enveloped her whole person. Carefully unclosing the door, she glided out, and approached the entrance to Mr. Lecour's apartment.

Without any conscious volition on her own part, Adrienne arose and followed her. The white figure paused in front of Mr. Lecour's door, and softly turned the bolt. The dazzling glare of many lights fell upon her rich costume, for he habitually slept with his room brilliantly illuminated. Approaching the couch on which he lay breathing heavily, the phantom bride stretched forth her arms, and held the cloud of lace in such a manner as clearly to reveal her features, and the wild masses of silver hair, amid which the fiery opals so strangely gleamed.

A clear, piercing voice cried out:

"Murderer! arouse yourself, for the White Terror is upon you! the White Terror is upon you!"

With a wild cry, Mr. Lecour started from the leaden slumber which had lately bound his senses, cast a horrified glance toward the pallid face that bent above him, and fell motionless upon his pillow.

Swiftly then the phantom glided back, tore off the loathsome finery, and consigned it to its usual receptacle. As she was leaving the room, her eyes fell upon the bed Adrienne had regained the shelter of before she returned, and now, with her finger pressed upon her lips, she drew near, peered through the transparent curtain, and by the faint light examined the face of the stranger. Adrienne struggled to speak—to ask her why she came there—but the words died away in her throat as she saw the former mistress of Bellair looking down upon her.

At this climax the senses of the overwrought girl failed her, and she became unconscious of everything.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A FORTUNATE ESCAPE.

"Choose, now, between me and your mother. If she be dearer, more precious in your sight, than the love you have professed, remain with her. I urge my claims no more."

So spoke Ambrose Sutton to the young girl at his side. They were walking together, one golden autumn afternoon, along a hillside path that overlooked the village where, amidst clustering shrubbery and overbowering trees, Amy Lee's home was nestled. She dwelt there with her widowed mother and young sister. It was the only home she had ever known. Until she met Ambrose Sutton, it held all whom she loved, and bounded her sphere of interests and duties.

Six months before she would have deemed it impossible that aught could tempt her to even wish to leave her home, to so much as entertain the thought of admitting other particular and personal interests.

Ambrose Sutton had received a call to a wealthy parish in a distant town. He had come out to seek his intended wife, and communicate the tidings to her. His acceptance was already written, and he announced that he expected her to be ready to accompany him, or at least to enter upon her new vocations before the Christmas holidays. Amy replied, in alarm, that she could not leave her mother, and then it was that Ambrose spoke the cruel words that open our sketch. Then that Amy, quite overpowered by them, and by the conflict of duties so suddenly presented to her, sank down upon the moss-grown trunk of a fallen tree, by the pathside, and burst into tears.

Without a word of sympathy in her distress, Ambrose turned away, and saying that he would give her until the morning to decide, strode down the path, leaving her weeping there upon the hillside.

Poor girl; at seventeen one has little strength to meet the fierce conflicts of duty and passion!

After a time a child's feet pattered along the hillside path. A childish voice, out of the gathering darkness, called "Amy!" "Amy!"

The girl rose up with a start, and met her sister.

"Mother wants you," the child said, "she feels worse; she says she shall not live till morning, and you are a bad girl to leave her so long."

Amy was recalled from thought to work. She seized the child's hand and hurried along the path, her conscience filled with vivid reproaches for her seeming neglect.

"How cold your hand is, Amy!" continued the child. "Mother said it would be just like you to go and take cold and die of consumption, as father did. Then she should die, of course, having nobody to take care of her, and I should be left alone."

Amy had no fear of colds, or dying, for herself, but what a vivid picture was this of the possible consequences of deserting her home. No, her duty plainly lay there, her first, her earliest, her nearest and most pressing duty. She could not leave her sick mother, nor her little sister, that was settled. And from that moment her decision was made.

When morning came, after meeting every want of the invalid, and performing with scrupulous care all the duties of the sick room, she escaped for a few moments to write the note expected by her lover, the seal of her fate.

Dispatching it by a servant, she sat awhile in her own room, revolving still a thousand troubled thoughts. It was hard thus to shut herself out from love forever, and devote her young life to tasks that seemed as interminable as thankless.

While she sat thus, her dear friend and confidante came in. Mary Russell was as different from Amy as possible—a bright, sparkling brunette, with lively manners, and a determined and headstrong will. She had ambition, too, and had envied her friend her prospective alliance with the popular and talented young clergyman.

A shade of satisfaction, she could not quite repress, now crossed her face as Amy, with the impulsiveness of youth and her warm loving nature, poured the story of her struggles and griefs into the ear of the only friend she knew, but she was subtle and artful, a thousand times a match for simple Amy, and she repressed even this slight manifestation of her feelings, and devoted herself assiduously to the task of comforter.

The next day she came again. She had been intrusted, by Mr. Sutton, with his farewell message to Amy, and, to do her credit, for she did love her friend a good deal, though much less than herself, she repeated it in a kind and sympathizing manner that palliated somewhat its unnecessary severity.

Still it blanched the cheek, and caused a strange cold shivering at the heart of the gentle Amy, to hear herself denounced as hopelessly sinful, in that she had broken her solemn promise, and to find the exhortation of repentance unaccompanied by any allusion to the circumstances which divided her duties, and made her subject to two strong and unavoidably opposing forces.

For the first time Amy found heart to blame her lover for undue severity, for a certain moral obliqueness that betokened an ever-looming self as the obstruction of his vision. This, more an impression than a discovery, aided her much in recovering a portion of the cheerfulness she had lost. This man who had no regrets save for himself, no recognition of other duties than those owed himself, no sympathy for any suffering or disappointment except his own, who had no conception of a parent's claim upon a child's affection, or the exalted devotion of a daughter's love, was scarcely worth wearing one's life out for in sorrow and lamentation. And these thoughts, aided by the necessity of constant occupation and thoughtfulness for others, promoted the establishment of a healthful reaction in Amy's soul.

Mr. Sutton went away to his new parish, and Amy felt, moved and breathed with freer impulses when he was gone. A new pastor came whom all the people liked, and Mr. Sutton was soon well nigh forgotten.

Nevertheless scarcely a year had elapsed before he was recalled to the memory of the people of the village in a very unexpected and remarkable manner. He suddenly returned to fetch away a bride—no other than the brilliant Mary Russell.

The wedding was very private, even Amy receiving no intimation of it except a brief note from her friend on the evening previous. No one was invited, and the bridal party left as soon as the ceremony had been performed.

Mr. Sutton's parish was a distant one, and as Mary Russell had been an orphan, who had only far-off relations in the village, there was little known of her after she went to her new home.

Years elapsed before she again visited the scenes of her youth. Years that had matured the gentle Amy into a noble and beautiful woman, with all her powers fully developed and disciplined. Years that had despoiled the once brilliant and piquant beauty of all her personal charms, and reduced her, while yet in the prime of her life, to the feebleness and decrepitude of old age, and she had come wearily back to die.

The iron hand of a despotism, as relentless as powerful, had indeed lain heavily upon this once lovely woman—the tyranny of the unscrupulous will of an utterly selfish man. She had not been subject to blows or vulgar abuse. Outwardly her life had seemed one of comfort and affluence; her husband having talent, influence, an affable manner to his peers, a condescendingly agreeable one to his inferiors.

Mr. Sutton refused the last request of his wife—that she might be permitted to die surrounded by the scenes of her youth. He fixed a day on which he "would arrive to take her home. It was more decorous that she should die among his people. He should expect her to be ready to accompany him."

There was neither sympathy nor sorrow in this letter—it was the mandate of a tyrant, and Amy, sitting by the bedside of her dying friend, shuddered as she read it. But one more inexorable than Ambrose Sutton interposed. Summoned in all haste, the minister arrived to catch his wife's dying breath, and it was but her poor lifeless remains that he bore homeward.

It was on that dreary visit that Mr. Sutton met Amy first, after all those years. He beheld her in the full maturity of her almost regal womanhood, and acknowledged her perfections. Her mother had long since departed; her sister, a young matron in a home of her own, no longer needed, much as she prized, the care and companionship of Amy. She was alone, free, and independent. Mr. Sutton resolved to secure her for himself.

He waited until a decorous period had elapsed after the death of his wife, and then wrote to her offering his hand, and a certain something which he took to be a heart, to her acceptance. He awaited her reply without a fear of the result. Having loved him once, and suffered heartbreak on his account in her fantastic devotion to duty, it was not to be supposed that now, in the acme of his fame and popularity, she could receive his offer save with joyful assent.

Nevertheless, much to his secret chagrin, he was decidedly, though most politely, refused, and in answer to the remonstrances he vouchsafed to offer to this decision, firmly pointed to the wasted life of the brilliant Mary. Humbled, but more enraged, he speedily turned to other hopes, and married a lady whose wealth was her sole attraction. It is said that he here met his match, a will that could not be bent to his own, and became, in consequence, a much more endurable person.

Amy married also. She met with the loving appreciation, the sympathy and kindness her nature required, and in her great happiness, often congratulated herself on the fortunate escape of her youth. Her story exemplifies the often quoted proverb that "Duty is sure to meet with its reward."

SPIRITS OF THE PAST.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

I am sitting all alone to-night,
Communing with the past,
And solemn are the shadows which
Are round about me cast;
And from the strings of memory,
Comes forth a sad refrain;
Which strikes upon my troubled soul,
In tones of endless pain;
The waters deep within my heart,
Rise freighted with past bliss;
But soon subside—to rise no more
Within a world like this.

I see once more the garden gate,
Where Lily May and I
Stood oft at eve to watch the stars
Climb up the azure sky;
One night I press'd her soft white hand,
And clasped her to my side;
And said in low and earnest tones
That she must be my bride;
But now!—I wake unto the real,
With fear my heart is riven;
My love is dead, and God has now
One Angel more in Heaven.

Yet still I sit, and oft commune
With spirits of the past;
For they around their loved ones here
Their wings of love oft cast;
And though ten years have pass'd away,
Since Lily May and I
Watched by the garden gate the stars
Climb up the azure sky,
Yet still her image from my heart
Cannot by death be driven;
There is an hour when she shall greet
My entrance into Heaven.

INDIAN FRIENDSHIP AND REVENGE.

A STORY OF THE NORTHWEST.

Non-on-i-go-ah (*the Blue Wind*), was justly acknowledged the bravest warrior of his tribe; and this among the warlike Blackfeet, who, it is conceded, even by their enemies, are the most chivalrous and fearless nation that hunt the buffalo upon the Great Plains of the Northwest, was by no means an insignificant compliment. And if one may believe the stories the French Voyageurs relate of him, and of his gallant exploits, he was well entitled to the reputation.

Among the many admirers of this renowned chief—for they were found among the whites, and half-breeds, as well as among the Red men—perhaps there never was one more enthusiastic than my old canoe friend and interpreter, Francois; and while encamped beneath some grassy bluff, or on the point of some quiet sandbar, there was no story he loved so well to repeat, as the following:

Non-on-i-go-ah, who was the son of a chief, was noted while yet a boy, as the leader of all the youthful games and mock fights, which took place upon the plain in front of the village, and at an early age was ambitious to deck his head with the eagle feathers of the warrior. This is a distinction to which all Indian youth aspire; and when scarcely half grown, he was permitted to accompany the warriors of his band, on the war trail against a band of Crees. The latter Indians had enroached upon the buffalo range, claimed as the exclusive territory of the Blackfeet, and were engaged in slaughtering animals, and jerking the meat, when the war party came suddenly upon them.

A bloody fight ensued, and many scalps were lost and taken on both sides. Among the Crees were many children and women, some of whom fell into the hands of the Blackfeet, and were afterwards adopted by them.

In the fiercest of the engagement, *Non-on-i-go-ah* singled out a remarkably handsome youth, about his own age, and rushed upon him. The young Cree stood his ground bravely, and received him with his upraised war club, which descended with a stunning blow upon his head. Quick as thought the boy whipped out his tiny knife, and was about to cut the scalp from the crown of his assailant, when the young Blackfoot, suddenly aroused by the pull upon his scalp lock, leaped to his feet, and with a blow of his fist struck his enemy to the ground. Non-on-i-go-ah now had the advantage, and grasping the knife just before raised upon himself, was about to perform the same operation upon the Cree, when, instantly struck by some expression in his face, or by some boyish caprice, he threw the blade from him, and disarming him, claimed the lad as his prisoner.

On the return of the Blackfeet to their village, it was proposed, by the father of Non-on-i-go-ah, to put the young Cree to torture, that his braves might celebrate the "victory dance" about him. But to this the boy, who now claimed to be a warrior, and entitled to the crest of eagle feathers, most strongly protested. He insisted that the captive was his prisoner, and he had the sole right to his person and his life. But the old chief was unmoved, and the young Cree was sentenced to undergo the horrors of the stake. The time was appointed, and the band notified of the coming event. In the meantime, however, the prisoner had disappeared; Non-on-i-go-ah had secretly withdrawn him from the medicine lodge, where he had been confined, and it was supposed that he had escaped to his people. His young captor had secreted him, in charge of two of his boy companions, upon an adjacent island in the river, and daily visited him. At length the strongest friendship grew up between these brave boys, and the Cree was adopted finally, with the consent of the tribe, as the brother of his noble protector.

They grew up side by side—their friendship cemented by the strongest ties, and their lives pledged to each other; and whether upon the hunt, or the war trail, *Non-on-i-go-ah* and his beloved *Won-ga-non* (White Buffalo), were never separated. Such was their mutual attachment, that when they became men, they owned everything—arms and horses, and even their dresses and medicine bags in common. Whenever they were spoken of by their band, they were always designated as *Teha-ho-tum-mee—the knotted horns that cannot be separated*—a reference to those antlers of elks, frequently found with the skeletons of those animals, so firmly entangled in some desperate and deadly encounter that no force short of breaking the branches, can tear them apart.

Thus these generous youths grew in stature and friendship together, till they reached the years of manhood, honored and beloved by all their people. They were acknowledged to be the handsomest and bravest among the young men; and there was not a maiden in the nation who would not gladly have kindled the lodge fire of either.

One day, while on the hunt together, a little distance from the village, these two friends, unsuspicious of danger, were suddenly beset by a scalping party of Shoshones, who were lying in ambush for them—and Non-on-i-go-ah, who was at some distance from his adopted brother, saw him shot to the heart with an arrow, and fall to the ground from his horse. At the same instant a half a score of the enemies rushed from their hiding-places to claim his scalp.

Non-on-i-go-ah, though almost frantic at the murder of his friend, was nevertheless as prudent as he was brave; and knowing the uselessness of his attempting, alone and single-handed, to defend the body, flew madly to the village, and raising the alarm, led a party of braves in pursuit. But the Shoshones had left a clean trail behind them, and could not be overtaken.

On retracing his steps mournfully to the spot, where still lay the mangled body of *Won-ga-non*, he found it impaled with a war spear, which in insulting bravado the foe had left starting from the wound. Tearing the bloody weapon from the body, Non-on-i-go-ah raised it aloft, and calling the Great Spirit to witness his words, in the presence of the braves, swore that the blood of his brother should be wiped off only in the heart of his murderer; and then, with yells of grief, he led the way back to the village.

The old chief recognized the mark upon the spear shaft as that of a noted war chief among the mountain Shoshones, named *Wee-cap-o-tar*, (*or Two Buffalo Bulls.*)

On learning this, Non-on-i-go-ah, with the spear still in his hand, ran frantically through the village, and stopping at the door of every lodge, again swore that he would never rest, nor sleep again in the place, till he had revenged the death of the brother of his heart—by bathing the bloody weapon in the bosom of *Wee-cap-o-tar*.

"I see the heart of my brother dripping blood from the point of this blade," said he, as he raised it aloft, "and it calls loudly upon Non-on-i-go-ah for revenge; and I have said it—it *shall be revenged!*

"I will take the war path alone; and if I return not for many moons, let none mourn for me; for I shall come again. The Great Spirit tells me I shall return with the scalp of *Wee-cap-o-tar* upon this blade, that has drank the blood of my brother! Let no man follow me!"

So saying, the warrior left the village, with his quiver full of arrows, his knife in his belt, and the spear of the Shoshone in his hand. For a time his people gazed sadly after him, as he wended rapidly, in a western direction, over the plain. At length the sun went down beyond the mountains, and he was no longer seen.

For two or three days Non-on-i-go-ah journeyed boldly—for as he passed over the rolling prairie, he could from the elevations survey a wide scope of country; and had any party of the hated Shoshones been abroad, he would have readily detected them. Thus he kept on in the fresh trail of Wee-cap-o-tar's party till they had entered the hills. Here he found it more necessary to move with caution, and therefore travelled only during the night—lying secreted in caves and crevices of the rocks by day, or venturing forth only to procure such small game as he required for subsistance.

One night, while clambering among the hills, he found himself suddenly upon the edge of a low cliff, overlooking a little valley, in the centre of which the beams of the setting moon lighted up the silver surface of a little lakelet, on the margin of which a smoldering fire showed it was the resting place of a party of Indians.

By the dim light he perceived that there were but three of them. Non-on-i-go-ah doubted not they were stragglers from the band of Woo-cap-o-tar, and he at once determined to steal upon them, and possess himself of their scalps.

With the stealthy tread of the wildcat, the young Blackfoot descended the bluff, and drawing himself through the damp grass upon his belly, silently approached the group. They were all buried in sleep—a sleep from which they were never more to awaken. The young man drew closer upon them; and as the moonlight fell upon their upturned faces, he discovered by the war paint still upon them that they were part of that same band of Shoshones that had killed his friend; and with the spring of the she panther he was upon them, and before the warriors were conscious of their danger, his keen knife was in their hearts. A few gurgling gasps—a few faint struggles—and their spirits had commenced the long journey their fathers had trodden before them.

The Blackfoot, snatching off their scalps, buried his lance-point deep into their bosoms, and raising it on high, while the red blood glistened in the rays of the sinking moon, thanked the Great Spirit for the happy omen, and then moved with exultant step away. But suddenly an idea occurred to him, and returning to the bleeding bodies of his victims, he hastily disrobed himself, and throwing his dress into the lake, stripped off that of one of the Shoshones, eagle feathers and all, and arrayed his own form in them. This completed, he turned his face once more westward, and continued his journey, with a lighter heart than he had known before since the death of Won-ga-non.

Westward he pressed his way till he reached the mountains, where, from valley to valley, he wandered in search of the village of Wee-cap-o-tar. Weeks passed away in the search, till one morning, as the sun broke through the early mists, his eyes were gladdened with a sight of a long line of lodges, which he at once recognized as those of the Shoshones.

Again the Blackfoot sought the shelter of the rocks, till the darkness of night closed upon the valley, when confident in the security of his disguise, he descended into the village. Fearlessly moving about the lodges and among the Shoshones, he sought for that of the hated Wee-cap-o-tar. For several nights he returned to the village, listening to the talk of the groups, amid which he boldly moved, till finally he ascertained the dwelling of the chief. But to his chagrin, he also learnt that his enemy was absent with a small party on an expedition against a band of Crows, whose village was among the Black Hills, to the south. This was discouraging to the brave fellow, and for some time he was undecided what to do. To return to his people he could never do without the scalp of his brother's murderer, for he had sworn to have this, or leave his bones to bleach upon the soil of the enemy's country. His dilemma was, whether to go in search of Wee-cap-o-tar's band, and watch his chance to waylay him upon the trail, or await his return to his village. But at length he decided upon the latter.

After many more days, and when the Blackfoot was suffering greatly for the want of food, (for while he remained secreted in the neighborhood, it was impossible for him to procure game,) his ears were gladdened with the war-cry of the returning band. They had made a successful foray, and were now advancing with a large herd of horses stolen from the Crows, and a number of scalps dangling from their spears and bridles.

When they reached their village the sun had gone down, and darkness soon after drawing its veil over the valley, Non-on-i-go-ah descended from his hiding-place, and joined in the victory dance with which the warriors were welcomed. He moved amid the crowd as fearlessly as if he were among the lodges of his own band, for his dress was that of a Shoshone, and none suspected that a deadly foe was in their midst.

At length the ceremony was ended for the night, and as the last exultant yells of the excited savages had died in echoes among the hills, Wee-cap-o-tar wended his way to his lodge. But there was a sleepless vengeance following in his footsteps, the fierce eye of the Blackfoot was upon him, and never again were his own eyes to close, till the last eternal slumber of death should come upon them. His untiring foe watched him till his form disappeared behind the curtain of his wigwam.

Non-on-i-go-ah threw himself upon the ground in the rear of the lodge, where he remained till the last noise had ceased in the village, and he knew the wearied warriors slept. He now boldly approached the door of the lodge, and entered, still bearing the blood-stained lance upon his arm. In the centre of the lodge glimmered the flickering flames of the expiring fire, over which still hung a vessel containing the remnant of the supper of the chief and his squaw.

The Blackfoot was hungry, and seating himself by the fire so that he could overlook the bed where the Shoshone had lain himself by the side of his wife, appropriated the contents to his own use.

The woman observing the actions of the stranger, roused her husband and asked:

"What strange man is that eating in the lodge?"

"I don't know," was the reply. "I suppose he is hungry—let him alone," and the chief turning himself in his robes, was soon lost in sleep. Among these wild Indians of the far west, it is customary for any one who is hungry to enter any lodge he chooses, and help himself to such food as he may find; for where the plains are covered with buffaloes, meat, the gift of the Great Spirit to his red children, belongs alike to all, and all are welcome to it.

Non-on-i-go-ah heard the words, but, regardless of them, continued to eat till he had satisfied his hunger; and then observing the pipe of his enemy, still warm from his last smoke, deliberately filled its bowl from the bag lying by its side, and lighting it by the fire, smoked it as if he were in his own lodge. Whift after whift rose in fragrant clouds from his mouth, as he sat with his eyes fixed fiercely upon the face of the unsuspecting Shoshone.

When he had finished the pipe, he knocked out its ashes and laid it aside. Then rising to his feet, he approached the bed of Wee-cap-o-tar, and laying his hand upon his shoulder, aroused him by the startling inquiry:

"Shoshone, do you *know me?*"

"No—*who are you?*" was the hurried reply, as the warrior endeavored to spring to a sitting position.

"I am Non-on-i-goah, the brother of the Blackfoot, Won-ga-non, whom you murdered with this lance! I am his avenger!" and clutching the Shoshone by the hair with his left hand, and forcing him upon the bed, with his right he buried the weapon into his heart ere he could utter a cry, and whipping off his scalp, darted from the lodge, and before the woman could raise the alarm, Non-on-i-go-ah was hidden beyond discovery among the rocks of the hills.

Many weeks had passed, and the Blackfeet had ceased to look for the return of the young warrior; they were confident he had fallen at the hands of their enemies, and his spirit had long since joined that of his beloved Won-ga-non upon the hunting-grounds of the blest; his friends had already cut off their locks in token of his death, when one morning they heard an exultant shout upon the prairie, and upon the green swell, descending rapidly towards the village, was a warrior waving over his head a long lance, from which were dangling four dark objects.

It was Non-on-i-go-ah returning successfully from his errand of revenge, with the scalps of the Shoshone chief and three of his warriors; and now the fierce war-cry of the band rang wildly out upon the plain, and the brother of Won-ga-non forgot his grief.

MY COUSIN CHARLIE.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

My mother and I lived all alone in the tiny cottage which was almost the sole property my father had left us.

We had been living some years in this lonely way, for the friends of prosperous days had nearly all fallen away from us; when a letter arrived (from my aunt Martha, in India,) which was destined to change the whole current of our lives.

The letter was not such as we had expected. Aunt Martha wrote that she had received the tidings of her brother's death while watching by the dying bed of her husband—that she, too, was now a widow, and her child fatherless—that our grief must have been hers in any case, but was now the more deeply felt because a similar bereavement had fallen upon herself. We, she supposed, were in our own home, surrounded by troops of friends, while she battled with her sorrow among strangers in a far land, and with her son's love for her sole consolation.

Thus bereaved, she wrote, she felt it impossible longer to remain in India. She should come home, reaching New York in the spring of the following year, and she and her son would gladly take up their abode with us for a time.

My mother and I looked at each other in dismay. It was already the spring of the year following that in which my aunt's letter had been writtten, that letter had evidently been delayed, and she and her son might have been passengers upon the very ship that brought it to our shores. How were we to provide for their accommodation in our tiny cottage? How dispose of the train of foreign servants they would doubtless bring with them?

We had little time to spend in uncertainty, for the evening mail brought us a letter from my aunt, dated at New York, in which she announced that she and her son would be with us by the latter part of the week, with two servants and the bulk of their luggage. So the question of ways and means must be discussed, in committee of the whole, at once.

"By the way, mamma," I asked, "how old *is* Cousin Charlie? I thought Aunt Martha had lost all her children in that unhealthy climate. I don't think I ever heard of Charlie before."

"And I am sure your father told me she had lost all. I seldom read her letters, myself, but I think this one must have been born since she wrote last, for I am very clear that all her older one's are dead. He cannot be more than four or five years old, I should think."

"What a dear little pet! I shall be so glad to have him here. It must be very pleasant to have a little child to caress and care for."

"Yes, dear. Home is not half home to a true woman without children. I thought four years ago that I should have been grandmamma by this time."

Dear mamma! She was the kindest of mothers, but she lacked tact. She never knew the sore aching of my heart that had followed the earliest storm of my grief and indignation, when Julian Howard deserted me in my poverty and bereavement. She thought the wound was healed, because it no longer bled outwardly. A cold pang shot through my heart at her words, and I hastened from the room, lest she should see how she had wounded me.

But better thoughts came to me in the busy solitude of the rooms I was preparing for our guests. If I was to live unloved, it was by no means necessary that I should also live unloving. I had mamma's declining years to watch over and make happy, and now, just as the monotony of my life was beginning to wear upon me, my aunt and little cousin were coming to give me new objects of interest. I shall be one of the sisterhood of single women, I said to myself, but I will find my happiness in being useful—husband and children may not be mine, but I can create for myself a sphere as honorable, if not as completely happy, as that of domestic life.

I was but twenty-four years of age, and life stretched far and long before me. I glanced at the mirror and saw a complexion that a simple, quiet life had made fresh and healthful as in early youth: undimmed eyes; tresses of golden brown, without a line of silver in all their shining bands; a form with all its youthful roundness. I did not look much like the conventional "old maid," but I had so long taken it for granted that such was to be my lot, that I wondered whence sprung the little sigh that parted my lips, and seemed to come quivering from the depths of that heart where my early disappointment still rankled. I believe those were tears that fell upon the snowy toilet cover I was spreading on the table of the guest-chamber, but I hardly know to which of the vague griefs that oppressed me they were due. And these all fled away when, with Jane's assistance, I brought down the crib in which I had slept a score of years before, from its long rest in the garret, and placed it in the room that had been mine, and heaped it with snowy pillows, meet for the rosy slumbers of the little cousin I expected.

I was very happy all that day, and the next, and the next, preparing for the new-comers and looking forward to the life that had so suddenly acquired new hopes and interest.

Mamma was restless and fretful. She had begun to settle quietly to the humble circumstances of her changed lot, she was an invalid and loved quiet, she was a proud woman and valued wealth and its accessories, and all this bustle, this anxious calculation of means, this adaptation of our narrow surroundings and scanty room and furniture to the accommodation of these stranger relatives, worried and annoyed her.

On the third day, after we had completed our frugal mid-day meal, our preparations being all ended, and our guests scarcely expected until the next day, I persuaded her to lie down for a long rest in her own room, while I tied on my garden hat and cloak, and taking a little basket of delicacies on my arm, set off to visit an humble friend and former servant of ours, who lived at the distance of a mile, and was lying ill.

I found poor Janet much worse than I had expected. She was quite alone, for her husband, an idle, reckless fellow, without either feeling or principle, had not provided her with an attendant, and was himself absent. Common humanity, had I not been, as I was, truly attached to the poor woman, would have prompted me to remain beside her until I had made every possible arrangement for her comfort, and the afternoon was well advanced when I was at last at liberty. Afterwards I called at a neighboring farm-house to procure the attendance of some person there, upon the sick woman, so that by the time I came in sight of my home the evening shadows were falling low and long.

The sight I saw there quickened my steps, and made my heart beat with unwonted agitation.

A large travelling carriage stood before the gate. The driver, assisted by one man, was carrying luggage into the cottage, and a dusky, shrill-voiced maid was busily unpacking its interior, and talking all the time in scolding tones to a burly, red-faced man of middle age, who leaned idly against the garden palings.

"Here's your master's dressing-case," I heard the brown maiden say, as I approached. "I suppose you won't feel above carrying that into the house—suppose it is not too heavy for your delicate hands."

The man moved lazily from his place, took the dressing-case, which he deposited under one arm, and then, as he turned, caught a glance of me standing almost by his side and lifted his hat, while the girl stared at me an instant with her large, mournful eyes, and dropped me a little courtesy.

There was no need of questions. I knew my aunt had come, and though I wondered what a child of four could want of that splendid dressing-case, I presumed that I should soon have my explanation; and as I followed the man, wondered that it had not occurred to me before that it had been the property of my deceased uncle.

The drawing-room was almost dark as I entered it. My mother, bewildered by being suddenly roused from her sleep, and with all her grief renewed by the sight of my aunt, was sobbing upon the sofa, where the two widows, in their sable garments, sat encircled in each other's arms.

My aunt rose as I approached her, and folded me in her embrace. A sunbeam entering between the quivering vine-leaves showed me her noble face—a softened reflex of my father's, yet with a calm, steadfast strength shining from all its lineaments, such as I had never seen in his. My heart went out to her in deep love and trust at once, and the kiss that we exchanged was the kiss of heartfelt adoption. My mother had always leaned upon me, but suddenly the strength that had almost failed beneath the burden, was renewed. A stronger and more steadfast nature had come to my aid.

"But where is my cousin?" I asked, when the first sentences of welcome and inquiry had been uttered. "Dear boy! I am so anxious to greet him."

"Here he is—by your side, and waiting for his welcome," said a rich, manly voice at my ear.

I turned and confronted—not the child I had pictured—not a baby Charlie, a pet and plaything, but a tall young man, whose years probably exceeded mine by three or four, whose dark, handsome face was brilliant with smiles, and whose outstretched hand waited to press my own. I was positively ashamed of the embarrassed greeting which alone, in my surpaise, I was able to ejaculate, but the laugh that followed my words taught me that the cause of my embarrassment was understood.

"Your mother, my good aunt, inquired very kindly for 'the baby' as soon as we arrived," continued that pleasant voice. "I am sorry for your disappointment, but if a full-grown cousin Charlie will in any degree compensate you for the loss of your expected pet, here he is, quite at your service, and ready to receive and to bestow all the affection which he learns you have been anticipating. We shall be *friends*, as well as cousins, I trust."

He looked so handsome and winning, as he said this, that I could not resist putting my hand again in his, nor turn from the kiss he pressed upon my cheek as the seal of our compact. I believe I was, even then, happier than I should have been with a baby cousin.

Our tiny cottage could not, by any means, contain the party that had arrived, so, after our late tea, Charlie and his valet went away to the village tavern, and the next day found lodgings at a farm-house near our home. The crib, stripped of its snowy covering, was again consigned to the garret. I returned to my own room, and the brown maid found another lodging, for my aunt liked me to be near her, and was never tired of telling me, in her caressing tones, how much I reminded her of the daughters she had lost.

Cousin Charlie lost his title long ago. He is my husband now, and we live in the great house which was the home of my childhood. My mother and aunt choose to live together in the tiny cottage. The white-covered crib stands always in my old room; and when our babies are sent to visit their grandmother's, they take rosy slumbers beneath its snowy canopy. I have found my true sphere—one of love and duty—and my home is a whole home, a real home; for a dear husband and children dwell there with me in a sweet household band that love unites, and perfect content makes holily beautiful.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

The most that you can do to a good man is to persecute him; and the worst that persecution can do is to kill him. And killing a good man is as bad as it would be to spite a ship by launching it. The soul is built for Heaven, as the ship for the ocean.

The plant that sprang from Helen's tears destroyed serpents. Would that from woman's tears some plant might ever spring to destroy the serpents in her bosom.

There are melancholy men to whom life is only a Dismal Swamp, upon whose margin they walk, making signals to Death to come and ferry them over the lake.

If a man has a good foot and figure and wants merely to make money, let him rather be a dancer than a thinker.

Eat little to-day, and you will have a better appetite to morrow—more to eat to-morrow and more tomorrows for eating.

The two most difficult things to conceal are love and drunkenness; words, tones, looks, gestures, gait, all betray them.

Mankind would not now be content to dwell again in the Garden of Eden unless there were a market-house, a grocery, a hotel, and a railroad hard by

If a disagreeable fellow insists on sharing your house with you, take the inside for your share, and give him the outside.

The man who, in talking to a lady, lays his hand upon her shoulder, may be thought too touching in his remarks.

The old Jewish law was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. The law of lovers is a sigh for a sigh and a kiss for a kiss.

God says to the fruit-tree, blossom and bear; and to the human heart, bear and blossom—the soul's great blossoming is the flower of suffering.

The champion should always be worthy of the cause; the great breath of freedom herself is degraded by being blown through a penny whistle.

The cheerful are the busy; when trouble knocks at your door or rings the bell, he will generally retire if you send him word, "*engaged.*"

Milton says that many thistles grow upon Parnassus. That must be the reason why so many donkeys browse there.

It isn't generally considered that political editors are entitled to pensions, yet a good many of them might well be pen-shunners.

He is not a true lover who doesn't think it better that a city should be sacked or an armada sunk than that the little finger of his sweetheart should ache.

Two things are greatly needed in these times—first, to curtail the laws; secondly, to curtail the lawyers.

It too often happens that being above the reach of want just places us within the reach of avarice.

There is a self-will that would break a world to pieces to make a stool to sit on.

Those only are fit for solitude, who like nobody, are like nobody, and are liked by nobody.

It is useless to bid young men and women bear bravely up; they are always losing heart.

If we would take snap-judgment on an intruder upon your premises, set a dog on him.

A man of fast habits is a man of lax morals; he plays the game of fast and loose.

Good sayings always suffer by repetition; good deeds never do.

If a man has warts and pimples on his nose, his face may be said to be roughly handled.

Weeds should never have been allowed to bloom, nor fools to marry.

The man troubled with a severe cold has a spell of personal bad weather.

So live that when your eyes are fixed in death they may be fixed on high.

The indigent world might be clothed from the trimmings of the vain.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A boy, fourteen years of age, was hung in a swing, in the cellar of his parents' residence, in Jersey City, one day recently, where he was in the habit of amusing himself. When discovered by a young sister he was found with his neck twisted in the cords of the swing, his body thrown forward, and his knees resting on the cellar bottom. He was in the habit of standing up in the swing and twisting it up as far as possible, and then allowing it to untwist rapidly and spin him round and round; and it is supposed that while thus spinning about he became dizzy, and falling, was caught by the neck, twisted up in the rope and thereby strangled.

The police discovered a den of counterfeiters in Thirty-seventh street a short time since and broke it up, but succeeded in capturing only the son of the principal counterfeiter. They made nothing but cents, both of the new and old kind, of which the captured boy said they had put off large quantities. The dies were carried away by the proprietor of the den, and will probably be put to further use.

A young man in Brooklyn, being out of employment, got hold of an electrical apparatus, hired a room, and advertised himself as an electrician; but nearly killing his first subject with a perfect thunderbolt of the electric fluid, he was obliged to flee to avoid arrest on a criminal prosecution. He should remember Napoleon's celebrated motto: "The tools to them that can handle them."

As a number of girls, from ten to fifteen years of age, were on their way home from school, in Brooklyn, one afternoon lately, they got to skylarking and poking fun and their parasols at each other, and one of them accidentally stuck the point of her parasol staff in the eye of one of her schoolmates with such force as to destroy its sight.

The body of an unknown man, apparently about thirty years of age, well-dressed, and of respectable appearance, was found floating in the Sound, between Fresh Pond and Smithton Landing, one morning recently. The body showed no marks of violence, and had nothing on it by which the name of the unfortunate could be ascertained.

A number of young men were pitching quoits near Bedford, one day recently, and some of them getting by the ears, became irrepressibly belligerent, and finally one of the party hurled a quoit (a large flat stone) at the head of a comrade who annoyed him, which hit the person at whom it was aimed on the temple, and hurt him so badly it was thought he would die of the injury.

A soldier who bravely fought and was wounded at the battle of Bull Run, was robbed the other day, by a servant girl in his boarding house, of all his pay, which he had received but a few days previous, and with which he had come to New York, on furlough, for the purpose of enjoying a brief respite, after recovering from his wounds.

A man named Jackson, living in Williamsburg, was arrested a few evenings since, after a desperate resistance, on the charge of wife-murder, he having beaten andkicked his wife until she was insensible, and seemingly mortally hurt. The unfortunate woman was taken to the hospital, and the husband was locked up to await the result of her injuries.

A surgeon living up town lately cut his throat, to escape a threatened criminal prosecution on account of an accident that occurred while he was performing a surgical operation. Being a man of much professional pride and faithfulness, the accident and the threatened prosecution so preyed upon his mind, that he sought refuge in death.

A man about sixty years of age was found one morning recently lying dead, with his face in the gutter, in Sixteenth street. It is supposed that he fell with his face downward, while he was drunk or in a fit, and was suffocated, there being a few inches of water in the gutter.

A couple of men got into a savage fight a few nights since, in Forty-second street, when one of them bit off the under lip and gouged out the eye of the other. The perpetrator of this fiendish barbarity was arrested on a charge of mayhem, and sent to the Tombs to await his trial.

A woman was burned to death in Fourth-street the other evening, by her clothes catching fire from a fluid lamp. She screamed frightfully, and ran around and around, so no one could help her, until she was burnt so badly as to be beyond the reach of mortal aid.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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WINTER QUARTERS.

From the fifteenth of December to the fifteenth of March, military operations in the field, anywhere in the country north of North Carolina, are generally impossible. It is true, the Virginian winter is mild compared with that of New England, but there are days and nights during every winter in Virginia that are cold enough to freeze to death a sleeping sentinel, and to render tents scarcely inhabitable. Occasionally, they have in Richmond snow enough for a few hours' sleighing. During the hard winter of six years ago, snow covered the ground, in the pine forests even of North Carolina, for six weeks. When the winter is mild, and there is no snow, the southern country is apt to be deluged with rain, and the roads become nearly impassible with mud.

Our army, therefore, must expect to pass at least the three winter months in camp or barracks. Whether those shall be months of misery, sickness, demoralization and death, or months of cheerful exertion, improvement, and healthy enjoyment, depends upon the wisdom and firmness of commanding officers.

The average soldier is a child. He *will* not take care of his own health. Accustomed to be cared for, thought for, provided for, the volunteer soon loses the habit of taking care of himself, and leans entirely upon his officers. If he is a good soldier he will obey orders, but there his virtue ends. It has been discovered by military men in every country, and acted upon as a law, that nothing whatever that relates to health and discipline can be safely left to the discretion of the soldier.

In winter, for example, men are constantly getting wet, particularly their feet. In civil life, those very men would make haste to change or dry their wet clothes. In camp, it is found necessary both to compel soldiers to do this, and to provide them conveniences for doing it. A drying room or hut, furnished with a stove, pegs and lines, and other facilities, so that every man can easily and quickly dry his clothes, saves a world of suffering and many lives—provided the men are *obliged* to make prompt use of it. So of ventilation. Soldiers will *not* take proper care that there is an aperture in their huts, or tents, during the night. Eight men will go to sleep in a little, almost air-tight enclosure, the air of which soon becomes rank poison. It was this that led Napoleon to oppose the use of tents altogether; he said men suffered less from exposure to the weather than from inhaling deadly poison into their lungs, seven or eight hours out of every twenty-four. But a vigilant, firm and humane officer can prevent this.

The army that will go into winter-quarters comparatively raw and undisciplined, may come out of winter-quarters, next spring, accomplished soldiers. The officers must carry the soldiers through, leaving nothing to their own choice which is essential either to health or discipline. Good cooking, cleanliness of person and camp, pure air, dry clothes, a warm bed, hard drill and plenty of games, newspapers and books, will give us in the spring of 1862 the finest army ever assembled.

SADDENING WORDS.

There are many euphonious words in the English language—more perhaps than in any other modern tongue except the Italian—of which the sound so harmonizes with the sense, that they charm at once the ear and the heart. The vocal body, so to speak, with which the sentiment is clothed, seems as appropriate to it as a lovely countenance to the possessor of a beautiful mind.

"Home," "Love," "Slumber," "Caress," "Welcome," belong to this category; but it is in certain pathetic expressions that the agreement of sound and sentiment strikes us as most perfect. Poe said that "Nevermore" was the most mournful of all words; Byron gave the same melancholy pre-eminence to "Farewell," and Dr. Johnson thought that of all phrases "The last" was the most touching. "The last look"—"the last sigh"—"the last of Earth;" these are certainly solemn and affecting utterances; but we think, with a late writer, that there is more real pathos in the word "*gone*" than in any other in the language. To use a Spanish, or rather Moorish, metaphor, it is "full of tears." How it appalls the sense and desolates the heart of the weeping watcher when spoken, ever so softly, in the chamber of death. *Gone!*—it cuts off all hope. It vibrates on the air like the tone of a passing bell. Gone, *forever!*—what four syllables in any language comprehend so much of mystery, and desolation and woe! "Gone!" says the lorn mother, when the dark angel has borne away the last lamb of her fair flock, "and I am left alone, *alone!*" "Gone!" shrieks the distracted widow as she reads the name of her heart's idol on the death-scroll of war. "Oh, husband, that I had died with thee!" "Gone!" sobs the strong man, as he totters, weak as an infant, from the solemn room where the wife of his bosom lies cold and pulseless. Ah! it is a word of sorrow even when spoken of the absent who may return, but, as applied to the unreturning dead, there is no elaborate sentence that ever was carved on tomb or monument so full of genuine pathos.

Yet there is a connection in which it imparts consolation to the bereaved. If we can say trustfully of those who have left us—"Gone!—gone to the *better land*," and hope and believe that we shall meet them where there are no more partings and the language of sorrow is unknown, we shall not refuse to be comforted "because they are not."

OUR FUTURE FIGHTERS.

It is proposed in some quarters to make military drill a part of the routine of our public schools. The experiment has been tried in boys' schools, but not, as we are informed, with good effect. At first, of course, the boys are mightily pleased with the new exercise, and exhibit great zeal. If, however, the drill is at all thorough, they soon become heartily sick of it, and are glad of any excuse to get off. At the same time, they learn nothing but the manual exercise and a few simple evolutions, and are apt to conceive a permanent disgust for everything relating to military affairs. Not so with young men in colleges. They are old enough to take a real interest in the matter, and to become proficient both in drill, and in the use of weapons. Many of our wisest citizens think that not a student should henceforth graduate from one of our colleges who does not know all of the military art that can be known without service in the field.

We consider this a matter of very great importance, because we believe that the United States, during the next fifty years, have got to do a great deal of fighting. The easy part of our national career is over. What we gain henceforth we must gain either by hard knocks or by being ready at any moment to deal hard knocks. In a year, or a month, we may have what will be called a peace; but it will not be a peace; it will be a truce. So let the boys *play*; but let every young man be trained and taught to do a soldier's part for his country.

The time was when every gentleman was taught the use of arms in order that he might be able to fight duels. We have outlived that notion. The time now is, when every gentleman must be a soldier, that he may be able to lead his fellow citizens against the enemies of his country.

JOHN CHINAMAN AS A HISTORIAN.

The Chinese publish their annals in their almanacs. "The Imperial Almanac of China for 1861," a literary trifle of only twelve volumes, gives a summary of the events of the preceding year, which is highly edifying. Former numbers of that interesting annal designated foreigners as "red devils," "outside barbarians," and by other uncomplimentary epithets. This style has been dropped, however, by the editors and compilers, and in the work for the current year they employ courteous language in referring to the white folks. The way in which the war with France and England is incidentally glanced at is remarkably funny. Nothing is said of armies defeated, forts razed, palaces sacked, and tribute exacted. The humiliation of the empire is smoothed over most ingeniously. It is merely stated, in an off-hand way, that the French and English Embassadors being accompanied by a large military escort, *misunderstandings* had arisen between the foreign soldiers and the Chinese chivalry, but that all difficulties had been arranged by the devotedness of the chiefs of the government. The Chinese, however, are not the only people in the world who compound with their pride at the expense of veracity

MERCY FOR CHILDREN.

It is a notorious fact that dismal views of theology and of nations and individuals are on record in our libraries, which are known to have proceeded, not from the brain, but the stomach. And yet we do not hear that their authors, although grown to man's estate, have ever been put in the pillory by way of punishment. Can anybody tell, then, why a little child who has been defrauded of its usual amount of sleep, or over-wearied in any way, or over or underfed, should always be put through his paces with the severity of a martinet, without any margin being allowed for infantile hindrances and obstructions? I often think if grown people were punished and reproved as unseasonably and unjustly as children often are, what a howl would be raised in the community; and yet these poor little victims of the govermental straight-jacket, may neither mutter nor peep, though every bone and muscle and nerve have been abominably outraged by ignorance and stupidity.

A child under five years, is never fractious according to our belief, unless it has good and sufficient reason for being so. Parents would do well to satisfy themselves of this, before administering reproof or punishment. The contrary course, is as if one stood by the bedside of a man with a fever, and called him to account for every mistake of his past life, when his head was beating like a trip-hammer, and his pulse on the race-horse order, under the insane supposition, that the censor was producing an excellent moral effect.

FANNY FERN.

RAINY DAYS.

It is curious how differently people are affected by a rainy day. There are your cat-sort, who at sight of the first drop, cower in the snuggest, warmest corner, and ask nothing but to be curled in a heap, till the sun shines out, be it two months or two days. The life in them seems quite suspended, or at least they desire but a blinking view of it, till the clouds scatter. I have no sympathy with that class. The fiercer the storm of hail, rain, or snow, the fiercer my desire to start out and brave it. The heavy drops and driving wind stir my pulses like a trumpet-call. I long to go out and wrestle with them; though umbrellas turn inside out, and stockings and bonnet *dye* in the struggle. I would not exchange the delicious glow that comes of it, for all the unwrecked millinery in the possession of the sunshine devotees. But the climax of my felicity is reached of a stormy evening; when dispensing with an umbrella, I let the pelting drops cool my forehead. When I splash through the deep puddles in long, india rubber boots, and am—like a man—independent of the elements; instead of a miserable ribbon-fettered female, shrinking like a canary from spoiling its fine feathers.

FANNY FERN.

THE LEDGER'S OPINION OF HENRY GRATTAN GUINNESS CONFIRMED.

[*From the Halifax Presbyterian Witness, Oct.* 26.]

REV. H. GRATTAN GUINNESS.—This noted preacher has got into great trouble in Canada. Dr. Irvine of Hamilton, appeared to him to be an "unconverted man," a "bad man," and so he would not preach in his Church. The Rev. Thomas Pullar of the Congregationalist Church was equally bad, and he told Dr. Jennings of Toronto, early in this month, that Mr. Pullar is "a very bad man." One thing is clear, that Mr. Guinness is a very imprudent and reckless man. Dr. Irvine speaks of him as "utterly unworthy of any notice from me, and I should consider myself degraded, by noticing him until he acts the part which even an honorable man of the world would long ago have done, and that without being driven from one contemptible subterfuge to another to cover his own baseness."

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A CHURCH MEMBER, (Hartford.)—The pamphlet to which you refer will doubtless "cut up" rich! Do not trouble yourself about it. We can take care of it, and the author, too, so far as we are concerned. We have procured a large number of his letters, and we can prove by them and by the testimony of one or two distinguished divines, that the man is guilty of lying. A mean, tricky man's own handwriting is a terrible weapon against him. Talleyrand, you know, used to say that he wanted only three lines of any man's handwriting to hang him. You can therefore readily imagine the quantity of "hemp" which this indiscreet and intermeddling busybody has spun for himself.

LEISURE HOURS.

BY EDWARD EVERETT.

No. Twenty-four.

THE COURSE OF ENGLAND AND FRANCE IN REFERENCE TO THE REBELLION.

As American affairs are now attracting great attention in Europe, so the course which may be pursued by the leading European powers with reference to the unnatural rebellion of the South, is a subject of no little interest on this side of the water. The government of the United States does not expect their co-operation; it has the right to expect their sympathy. It has a right to expect, in the interest of all stable government, in the interest of truth and right, and of common humanity, that the enlightened governments of Europe, which have intimate relations with this country, should, as far as the law of nations permits, discountenance and frown upon the attempt which is now making to destroy its national existence. Of the five great powers of Europe, Austria, we believe, has not expressed herself on the subject. The generous and enlightened view of the struggle taken by the Russian government formed the subject of my last paper. Prussia, at a still earlier period, expressed herself substantially to the same effect. The course to be pursued by the French and English governments, with whom our relations are more intimate, and whose policy, as it may be friendly or hostile to the United States, would affect us more directly, has not been so distinctly indicated.

In the haste with which the British government announced an entire absence of preference between the two parties to the struggle, and an intention to recognize the Confederacy as belligerents, the American people have certainly been disappointed. That the rebellion had its origin in slavery is just as certain, as that the war of the American Revolution had its origin in the claim of the British ministry of a right to tax America. Attempts have been made abroad to throw doubt upon this point, and to make the manufacturing interests of France and England believe, that the protective policy and not slavery is the cause of the war. We in this country know better. We know that though the public mind at the South has at times been inflamed on the subject of the tariff, yet that it always had friends there; that the culture of cotton was originally introduced under the operation of a protecting duty; that the sugar culture was not only introduced but sustained by protection; that the high duties at the close of the war of 1812 were enacted under the influence of the leading Southern Members of Congress; and that the discontent of the South on this subject, fomented by ambitious men, had culminated and yielded to constitutional modes of adjustment a generation ago. Even when it seemed most ominous of mischief, in the days of nullification, we knew, in the language of President Jackson in May, 1833,—himself no friend of high protection,—that "the tariff was but the pretext; that disunion and a Southern Confederacy was the real object." We did not then know, with what prophetic foresight it was added by him, that "the next pretext will be the negro or slavery question."

The point, in fact, may be allowed to rest on the admission of the Vice-President of the Southern Confederacy, that their constitution rests upon slavery as the corner-stone. In his speech at Newcastle-on-the-Tyne, on the 15th of October, Earl Russell, while remarking that the two parties are now "contending not upon the subject of the slavery question," adds, "though that I believe is the original cause of the conflict." He afterwards (as reported) explains his meaning to be that one party is contending for Empire and the other for power. If it is intended by this that the United States are struggling to maintain the Sovereignty of the Union, against a wicked rebellion, prompted by the aspirations for power of certain disappointed southern politicians, (as affirmed by the confederate Vice President a twelve month since,) the remark is just, but it is not the less true, that those leaders have been able to rally the south mainly on the subject of slavery. Every other subject of irritation, of which there have been several, (for it is ever the craft of demagogues to turn every thing into a grievance,) has been, and is merely auxiliary. The rebellion has been brought about by ambitious men aspiring to power, who have succeeded, by years of agitation, in inflaming the public mind on the subject of slavery. The English language could not express the truth more clearly or more tersely than it was done by General Jackson, in the words already quoted: "The tariff was but the pretext; Disunion and a Southern Confederacy are the real object; the next pretext will be the negro or slavery question."

Such being the case, the government and loyal people of the United States expected, and had a right to expect, the warm sympathy of England. While our fathers were subjects of the British crown, they were fortified in their growing aversion to slavery, by the anti-slavery sentiment which developed itself with strength and rapidity in England, in the last third of the eighteenth century. When the slaves of the Northern States before and during the revolution, brought actions against their masters for assault and battery, and for wages due for labor, the greatest stress was laid by the counsel employed to defend these actions, on the doctrines inculcated by Lord Mansfield in Sommersett's case. In imitation of the societies formed in England for the abolition of the slave-trade, similar associations were formed here. Granville Sharp was in correspondence with leading men in this country. Mr. Jefferson wrote a letter to Dr. Price, thanking him for the publication of an anti-slavery pamphlet. The speeches of Wilberforce found their way into our school-books; the public opinion in America, which began by following, was not long behind that of England on this subject, and in forming the Constitution of the United States a provision for the prospective abolition of the African slave-trade was incorporated into the fundamental law. The suppression of this traffic, with the prohibition of slavery in the territories of the United States—a measure at that time approved by both sections of the country—would, it was believed, at no distant period, result in the total abolition of slavery, to which the patriots and statesmen of America, South as well as North, looked forward as a consummation devoutly to be wished for.

Notwithstanding these circumstances, coupled with the facts that slavery had been originally planted in the country under British authority, and that the colonial enactments against the African slave-trade had been persistently negatived by the crown, the continued existence of slavery in the United States was the theme of never failing denunciation in England. On all occasions for the discussion of the state of society in this country; in all the vehicles of public sentiment; in all the literary and political journals, alike the liberal and the conservative, as much in the Edinburgh as in the Quarterly Review; in parliament and in Exeter Hall, the existence of Slavery in the United States was the favorite topic of censure, often bitter and unsparing, especially after its abolition in the British Colonies. Not content with the usual agencies by which public opinion is influenced, and by laying the entire literature of our common language under contribution for this purpose, able speakers and practiced agitators were sent across the Atlantic to carry the war against Slavery "into Africa;" while domestic libels on public men in the United States, guilty of conservative opinions on this most difficult of American questions, were systematically transmitted and promulgated in England, in order to be returned to this country, as indications of public opinion in Europe.—So uncompromising was the hostility of England to American Slavery, and so unreserved and intolerant its manifestation, that she was universally regarded by the Southern States, as the most formidable of the enemies of their social system. A very leading Southern politician, now holding high office under the Confederacy, said in my hearing, in the Senate of the United States, that there had not been a time for ten years, when he would not have voted for a war against Great Britain, as a great anti-slavery propagandist power. It was the well known opinion of Mr. Calhoun and his followers, that among the motives which prompted the recent colonial policy of England, was the hope that it would tend indirectly but strongly to the subversion of Slavery in the United States.

Such are the antecedents on the part of England, with which she approaches the existing rebellion, the admitted consummation of projects long entertained by ambitious men, despairing of the continued monopoly of the government of the Union hitherto possessed by the Slave interest, and skilfully availing themselves of the anti-slavery agitation at the North, so earnestly encouraged and promoted by England for more than a generation. She sees this rebellious movement having its origin, as Lord Russell truly states, in Slavery; originating in that one of the Slave States which has ever led the van in inflaming the public mind of the South on the imputed aggressions of the North; organized in a pretended Confederacy boastfully declared by its second officer to rest on the corner stone of Slavery; administered by men notorious for their hatred of England as an anti-slavery power; and beyond some rather cold generalities of regret at the troubles which have come upon "our brethren in America," (regrets that include alike the government and the rebellion, the loyal citizens of the Union, and those who are waging a cruel and deadly war against it,) scarce a word has she uttered of cordial sympathy with a friendly power, in this season of extreme trial, contending for principles drawn in with the mother's milk of England's breast. "Scarce a word of sympathy," did I say; the precise reverse; the rebellion ascribed to anything and everything but its true cause,—to the inherent imbecility of democratic government, (as if the strength of the English government rested upon anything but its popular element,) to the protective policy, to class jealousies, and finally by Earl Russell, to a simple instinct of empire on the one side, and thirst for power on the other, which have caused the contentions of "so many of the States of the old world."

Two months had not elapsed from the outbreak of the rebellion,—Messrs. Adams and Dayton, known to be on their way, had not reached their posts,—when the Confederates were recognized as "belligerents," and a strict neutrality between the two parties proclaimed. There was nothing in this recognition in contravention of the law of nations. Corsairs fitted out at the South to prey upon the lawful commerce of the United States, were pirates by our law, as corsairs fitted out from Scotland in 1745 or from Ireland in 1798, to prey upon English commerce, would have been pirates by the law of England; but England was certainly not bound to consider Mr. Jefferson Davis's privateers as pirates by the law of nations. She quoted the precedent of the Greeks and Turks, and our own conduct toward the revolutionary colonies of Spain, as a precedent for recognizing them as belligerents, and urged the intimate and extensive commercial relations of the two countries, as a circumstance requiring prompt action. But the recognition of the Greeks as belligerents was, if I mistake not, delayed two years, that of the South American Republics, (between whose case and ours there is but a slight analogy,) much longer; and as to any *practical* necessity for meeting the question, no one can suppose that there was even a possibility that the Confederate privateers would capture British vessels. One would have thought, under these circumstances, that unless the foreign governments really are entirely indifferent to the moral aspects of the struggle, their decision of the question might have been delayed till it was forced upon them by events.

Meantime, by several of the leading presses of France and England, the utmost pains are taken to prejudice the public mind of Europe against the cause of the government and of the loyal people of the United States, in reference to the war and the manner in which it is conducted. If the South had been engaged in a crusade in favor of freedom, while the North was warring to perpetuate and extend slavery, the cause of the South could not have been more warmly pleaded by presses that have been denouncing slavery for thirty years. The constitutional right of individual States to secede from the Union is dogmatically maintained abroad, in opposition to all the traditions of our government, the decisions of our highest tribunals, and the authority of our wisest statesmen. Notwithstanding the entire want of analogy between the rebellion of the South against a domestic government all but monopolized by themselves and the resistance of our Fathers in 1775 to the arbitrary acts of a transatlantic parliament in which they were not represented, the unfriendly press in England taunts us with the assertion that the South has the same right to throw off the government of the Union, that the American Colonies had to throw off the government of England; forgetting that, in the opinion of England and especially of that school of her statesmen now most distinctly sympathizing with the South, the war of the American Revolution was always regarded and spoken of as a Rebellion, against which England struggled as long as she could do so with the slightest hope of success, and which she refused to recognize in terms for two years after all her military operations had ceased with the capitulation of Yorktown. Meantime no pains are spared to display in the most imposing light the success of the rebels, to exaggerate the reverses of the loyal armies of the United States, and no opportunity omitted to produce the impression that the struggle to maintain the Union is hopeless.

Nor is this all; in some quarters it is openly maintained, in others intelligibly intimated, that the time is rapidly approaching when those European countries, which depend upon America for staple products, must *adopt measures* to relieve themselves from the inconveniences which they suffer from the interruption of their accustomed commercial intercourse. These measures, more or less obscurely hinted at, are to recognize the Confederates as an Independent Power, and to break the blockade of the southern ports. Mere recognition, though it would give great moral aid and encouragement to the Confederates, would afford no relief to the suffering commerce of Europe. If this relief is, at all hazards, to be procured, it can only be by breaking the blockade; that is, *waging war on the United States.*

Such, in fact, is the truly monstrous course recommended and threatened by journals and speakers—some of them men of position, members of parliament—in the interest of the manufacturing and commercial classes of Europe. No enlightened government, no conscientious statesman will, I am sure, countenance a policy so utterly at war, not merely with the law of nations, but with the dictates of humanity. What, because you suffer some inconvenience in your industrial pursuits, from the existence of the cruel war forced upon the North in this most unrighteous cause—an inconvenience which the industrious North equally sufferers—will you, purely and solely from selfish motives, add to all the other calamities of the conflict those of an unprovoked war with two of the leading powers of Europe? You, anti-slavery England, on account of a temporary check in the supply of cotton, are you going to send your fleets of iron-plated vessels to batter down the cities of the friendly and industrious North, whom for thirty years you have been taunting for her necessary tolerance of slavery, under the constitution of the United States? Are not two wars enough, forced upon America within the memory of living men, and on grounds which your own statesmen now admit to be untenable? The war of the Revolution was waged to enforce the right of Parliament to tax colonies not represented. Lord Chatham denied, at the time, that you had the right, and "rejoiced that America had resisted;" and you have yourselves latterly conceded responsible self-taxing governments to most of your colonial settlements. In 1807–12, after giving up our lawful commerce a helpless prey to your cruizers to the amount of tens of millions, you brought upon us the woes of another war, by those Orders in Council, which your most intelligent text-writers on public law, and your late Lord Chief Justice and Lord Chancellor have pronounced to be in violation, not merely of the law of nations, but of your own municipal law? Will you, before all the contemporaneous victims of the oldest of these conflicts have gone down to the grave, wage a third war against us, merely to keep the shuttles of Manchester in motion next winter?

And you, France, who for the gravest reasons of state lent your all-powerful aid to America in establishing her independence; who perceived, a generation in advance, the important part assigned by Providence to our Union, "as an essential element of the universal political equilibrium;" who entered into alliance with us, and mingled your blood with ours on the battle-fields of the war; whose first act after emerging from the chaos of your own revolution, was to revive the friendly relations of the two countries; who, in the cession of Louisiana, made the largest and most magnificent contribution to our growth and welfare that was probably ever made by one government to another; who, under every *régime* and every dynasty have given us the most convincing proofs of enlightened sympathy, are you now, for the sake of restoring the market for a few invoices of your silks, and wines, and cotton fabrics, going to undo the great work of your own hands; to assist England in destroying that noble nationality you helped us to create; and to subvert that essential element of the general equilibrium, which exists as much for your benefit as ours?

It is impossible. Neither the government of France nor of England can possibly pursue a policy so much at war with every principle of public morality. And if all consideration of our rights as an independent people, all respect to the plainest dictates of the law of nations, nay, all regard to their own permanent interests, should fail of their due effect, may we not, with tenfold pertinence, echo the inquiry of Earl Russel, "whether it is not the duty of those who have embraced the precepts of Christianity" to see whether the present enlightened age will tolerate a war on the part of England and France against the United States for the purpose of supporting an insurrectionary government which boasts that it rests upon the corner stone of slavery, which will unquestionably re-open the African slave trade, and which in its principle and certain effects, strikes a deadly blow at the cause of western civilization, and this merely to relieve the manufacturing interests of those two countries?

That I have not expressed myself too strongly, in saying that "scarce a word of cordial sympathy with us has been uttered" in England, appears from an empathic statement, in the last number of the Edinburgh Review. In an elaborate article, under the inauspicious title of "The Disunion of America," it is said, "with the exception of Mr. John Bright, we are not aware that any Englishman of note has addressed to the Americans, either of the North or of the South, one word of encouragement since the outbreak of the war." This remark unhappily is regarded, on this side of the water, as accurate only in part. To the Government and loyal people of the United States, it is most true that scarce a word of encouragement has been spoken; to the so called Southern Confederacy, the prevailing voice of the public men of England, and the almost unanimous tone of her press, including this article, are eminently encouraging.

November 2nd, 1861.

NURSERY POISON.

Where there are no candy-shops, there you may find robust, healthy young people. I was particularly struck with the absence of these children-killing establishments when in Canada. In fact, the perfect health so apparent in the faces and forms of its inhabitants precluded the possibility of sugar-candy. Now, in New York, everybody knows that these establishments are quite a feature in our principal streets. Every child you meet, unless its sacred silk or velvet dress, taboo the munching process in public, has its stick of candy, or sugared pop-corn ball, or some other saccharine horror, to destroy its teeth and stomach. Mothers who would be shocked, should you suggest that they are criminally careless of the health of their pets, never go on a shopping expedition without securing on their return voyage a parcel of these noxious baby-messes for little Tommy or Agnes, who of course turn away from solid food after this surfeit, to uneasy, feverish pillows. A few months of this soon tells its story, in the little pale face, languid step, and feverish breath, and the family doctor is summoned to know "what *can* ail our Charlie." Perhaps he tells the truth, and perhaps he don't; but every mother worthy of the name, ought to know without telling, that such a course can have only a fatal ending, if persisted in. We believe there are times when a small allowance of candy may not hurt a child. Perhaps in moderation, after a good, healthy meal of plain, nourishing food. But to delegate to a nurse discretionary power in this regard, to quiet a child whose little legs give out from weariness, or who is otherwise overtasked, and thus gain a momentary selfish reprieve from its fretting, by this absurd quietus for an empty stomach, is simply suicidal. We have often seen the little things sitting upon the benches in the parks, swallowing this sickening stuff, when they really needed a sensible piece of bread and butter; and then looked at the *poor* children who were looking wistfully on, and computed the chances of health and longevity in favor of the latter, even with all the disadvantages attendant upon poverty. It is perfectly amazing—the indifference or ignorance—perhaps both, of New York mothers, on this subject. I never see them pocketing their candy-parcels on the way home, that I do not long to say, why *don't* you throw them all in the nearest gutter?

FANNY FERN.

OUR FELLOW-CREATURES.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"God spake unto Noah, Behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you, and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and with every beast of the earth; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood."—*Genesis, 9th.*

The Sea of Time flows o'er the beach of life,
First with a gentle tide, then in bold waves
And terraces of foam. The bathers leap
To the bright flood with revelry and glee,
Too oft forgetful of the under-tow,
And tangled sea-weed that may chain the limbs
In dire paralysis. Yet still goes on
The heavy murmur, as if Ocean's heart,
Swelling and surging with a mighty grief
Could find no respite.
Gaiety and song
Afford no refuge to the eternal moan
Of misery, that from the darkened earth,
The under-strata of society,
Upriseth, night and day. Who lists, may hear
The whole creation of inferior things
Groaning and travailing, with pain, because
Of man's oppression.
The poor brute who toils
For him who smites him, hath no friend to stay
The madden'd lash that cuts the quivering nerve.
Oh God! have pity on the animals
Whose nature we partake yet steel our hearts
From their down-trodden sympathies.
Methinks
Their almost sentient properties might win
Some condescension. See the elephant
Lift high his foot[*] to spare the fallen child;
The horse, with gratulating neigh salutes
The groom who feeds him; and the noble dog
Draws from the flood the drowning boy, or dies
With his loved master.
Even in lower grades
We trace intelligence, or gain, perchance,
Useful example for our lordly race.
The father[†] of the barnyard flock might give
Lessons in household courtesy; the ant,
Whom Israel's wisest monarch deign'd to praise,
Teacheth of forethought and of industry,
While the untiring tenants of the hive
Amassing sweetness even from weed and thorn,
Are lecturers in a true philosophy.

Owe we not something to the humbled tribes
That do our bidding, or like martyrs die
That we may live? They institute no claim,
And ask no payment for their services,
Save food and shelter. Might we not bestow
Some zest of kindness on their narrow span,
Their all of being? Who turn not like us
Unto a future life to equalize
Discrepancies in this.
Is there no law,
No pitying compact, no protecting code
'Tween lord and vassal, which the King of all,
With just Eye noteth? He who when the earth
Lay seething from the deluge, deign'd to make
Covenant with man and beast.
His glorious Book
Regards with commendation him who shows
Mercy unto the speechless animals
That own his sway. So, may we ever strive,
By kind commiseration, to assuage
Their servitude who thus in lowly guise,
Subordinate and patient, do our will.
Encouraging their virtues, and, perchance,
Finding them teachers of fidelity,
Enduring love, or deathless gratitude.

Newport, R. I., Sept. 28th, 1861.

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[*] In one of our visits to Les Jardine des Plantes, in Paris, a large elephant escaped from durance, and disported himself by swiftly running within the premises. The visitants of the garden fled in every direction; and a nursery-maid, in her fright, let fall the child entrusted to her care. The noble creature, amid the wild joy of his brief liberty, took pains to lift his huge feet, and pass carefully over the helpless infant.

[†] Mr. E. Merriam, the astronomer of Brooklyn, N. Y., who is distinguished by great kindness to the animal creation, says:—"An assistant observer at the antipodes, on his return to this country, brought me a fine, white cat, who has now four snowy kittens, beautiful, and very intelligent. One morning, while feeding her, three chickens and their father wished to share with pussy. I threw them a pennyworth of buckwheat, and he immediately called the mother, who was brooding upon her nest. She came, and while taking her dinner, the little ones stood aside, and waited. When she had finished, the father called them, who very gladly partook; and I was delighted with the example of good order and family discipline thus exhibited."

◆

VASCO PERES,
THE COOPER OF ALCOBAÇA.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

CHAPTER IX.

"One trick needs a great many more to make it good."

During the foregoing conversation between the brother and sister in the vaults of the castle, another of a very different nature was taking place in the upper part of the same stronghold. The Lord of Valverde was in his private apartment—the same mentioned at the commencement of Chapter IV.—walking up and down with impatient strides, when the door opened, and Fernão Rodriguez entered.

This man, whom we cursorily introduced in the fifth chapter, was short, thin and ill-shaped. The low, flat, receding forehead, and the wide, lipless mouth, extending almost from ear to ear, gave the countenance a peculiarly repulsive, even nauseous aspect, reminding one inevitably of the serpent. Nothing was known of his origin—perhaps he knew little of it himself—and he had been in the employ of Cabreira some time before the war, as the latter had found him very useful as an agent in transactions of a doubtful nature. The fellow had contrived to make himself so necessary to his master, that on mustering the force he now commanded, Cabreira had succeeded in getting him placed over the crossbowmen with the title of *coudel*.

"Well, Fernão, what comfort dost thou bring?" asked Cabreira, eagerly, as the man made his appearance.

"Good and bad," was the reply.

"And which is the bad?"

"This: that there is no tracing the monk. I passed some time at the monastery in friendly confabulation, and was soon on excellent terms with Frei Bernardo; but all to no purpose. Several of the brothers are absent, and so many have been going in and out during the afternoon that it were easier to pick out an eel, in a thrice, from among a thousand snakes, than to discover this monk in the midst of so many in the same array."

"Well, and how about the other business? Didst thou manage to elicit aught from the coopers?"

"Yea; I conversed with a few of them, and satisfied myself that they have no misgivings of the real motive of your descent on Alcôa last night. They suppose that you really and truly suspected treachery; but they are vehement in maintaining that your suspicions were groundless."

"Good," answered Cabreira; "and now, before we treat of other matters, I have a fair piece of news for thee, Fernão."

"Good news is too scarce now-a-days not to be drank in with eager ears and grateful heart," and Fernão, who, seeing that Cabreira had seated himself, came and sat down by him without awaiting an invitation.

"Thou knowest that the cooper's possessions are mine?"

"This you told me some hours since," replied Fernão.

"That I have just taken possession of them according to the forms of law?"

"This was a matter of course."

"Hence, they are mine beyond dispute?"

"Undoubtedly; and the estates of Runa are yours, and your fortune is made; but I see not in what this concerns me, noble sir," remarked Fernão, in a snarling tone, and with a smile meant to convey the idea that he thought himself ill-treated.

"Hear me, man: I intend to make thee a donation of Vasco's property."

"Ah! that alters the case," cried Fernão, his moody expression changing into one of delight; "you were ever liberal, senhor, ere your substance ran low, and now that it gathers flesh again, you show the same generous spirit."

"The notary shall be sent for, and the documents made out this very night, so that to-morrow thou canst take possession."

"I am your servant in all you may command. You must have found the cooper's money-box well filled, senhor?"

"A goodly sum, no doubt, whereof thou shalt have twenty doubloons to keep thee in good humor, till thou begin to draw proceeds from thy well-earned estate. But my bounty shall not rest here if thou wilt continue faithful to me, and use all diligence in what I may require of thee."

"Can you doubt of it, senhor?"

"In so doing thou wouldst serve thyself likewise; nay, it is a necessity, if thou have a mind to profit by that which I have just given thee."

"What is to be done, senhor? I shall always know my devotion to your interests."

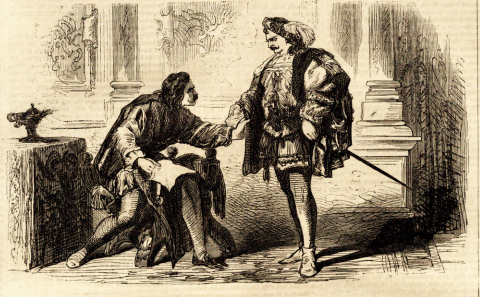
"Why, in truth, Fernão, we must take a calm survey of matters, and leave nought undone to strengthen every weak point, and render that safe which is still insecure."

"Most undoubtedly."

"For the present everything prospers; all my plans have succeeded admirably."

"Even beyond your expectation," added Fernão Rodriguez.

"But the future! There are two modes of viewing it: Castile may triumph, or Dom João d'Avis may send them across the frontier at a rate something speedier than they came. In the first event, all goes well with us. For, albeit I should have to renounce the estates of Runa, which would be returned to Dona Elvira Forjaz, and she compelled by the king to give her hand to Diogo Alvares Pereira, yet the confiscated estates of the constable, which would fall to me, would well nigh compensate me for the loss of those of Runa."



PLOTTING MISCHIEF.

"But if it so turn out, how about this property of Vasco Peres?" said Fernão, with evident alarm.

"Fear nought," replied Cabreira, with a smile at the fellow's anxious concern about his own interest, "thou shalt retain the whole. I could soon convince the king of Castile that the cooper was no partisan of his, and that the accusation I brought against him was only a feint to get him out of the way. And rest assured Vasco Peres would be the last to gainsay me in this. I know the fellow; he would rather lose every rood of land than brand himself a traitor, or deny the truth. Now if, on the other hand, Castile should succumb and Portugal gain the day, our business would put on another face, and here's the pinch. But all can be provided for. Vasco Peres, I know for certain, has nought barring vague suspicions to bear him out against me, and by the information thou hast just given me, I perceive he has not even communicated these suspicions to his workmen. This is one danger less to be guarded against, and these men need give us no further care; they could only prove that Vasco led them to the quinta, and, if he be out of the way, none remain to explain the motive thereof, except——"

"Of course Vasco Peres must be got rid of by some means or other," said Rodriguez, interrupting Cabreira.

"Not only he," observed the latter, "but also Dona Elvira. For should the Portuguese prevail, the king will most certainly look into this affair; both Vasco Peres and the lady of Runa could easily destroy all my work."

"And yet how came it that the coopers were at the quinta when we arrived? does it not seem as if our scheme, by some fortunate coincidence, squared with truth?"

"Tush, man!" rejoined Cabreira, "thou touchest there another peril—that infernal monk, who might pass for Satan himself. However, this does not give me much concern; I have arranged matters in such a way, that if the king should ever hear, as no doubt he will, of my understanding with João Gonçalves, he will know in what light to view it. At most, the monk could do no more than create misgivings, and even this I doubt."

"But the coopers, how came they to be at Alcôa?" said Fernão, still unable to account for this.

"'Tis clear to me they were induced to go thither at the monk's persuasion, who probably saw our troop on the way."

"All this looks much as if we were entangled in a mesh, senhor," observed Fernão, whose brain, though full of craft, was unable to cope with any serious difficulty.

"Nay, I think not; if we can put Dona Elvira and Vasco out of the way, all will go right. If Dom João of Avis triumph, my services would require some guerdon; my skill in warfare is admitted, and I should not fail to make it still more evident were I to see the enemy show a decided weakness. My services are indispensable to Dom João, and it must not be fancied that the battle will end the dispute. A victory would undoubtedly secure the crown to the Grand-Master, but there will be plenty of work to be done along the frontiers for the next two or three seasons—who can tell when peace will be restored? The king would have a care lest he did aught that might aggrieve me. Now, if Dona Elvira dies—a natural death, we'll suppose—this settles the matter. The heirs to the estate are all distant relatives, and it is an absolute certainty that no attention would be paid to their protestations of her innocence."

"I would suggest an easier course, and quite as sure in its consequences," said Fernão.

"Thou wouldst show more intellect than I have given thee credit for. Speak out," replied Cabreira, incredulously.

"The lady is now in your power; convince her that she has nothing to hope for the future, and offer yourself to her again: credit me, she would sooner marry you than pass a life of wretchedness."

"Is this, then, thy great expedient? Thou must, forsooth, take me for something of a lout, to imagine that this had not occurred to me before. But there is an insurmountable obstacle to this. Dona Elvira hates me, and nothing would induce her to consent."

"Then force her to it," rejoined Fernão, with a significant smile.

"Impossible; there were too many witnesses to my oath—such a course would damn me. I do not propose seeing Dona Elvira while she is in my custody. I say there is but one thing to be done. Both she and Vasco Peres must be disposed of in some way. Dost thou apprehend, Fernão?"

"It should seem that there can be but one way to interpret your words," replied Fernão, without committing himself.

"Things must be so managed that they may neither speak, see, nor hear for the future."

"Death alone could effect this in the present juncture; is it what you mean to infer?" asked the crafty villain, pretending doubt.

"Thou hast hit it, Fernão, and what is thy mind about it?"

"I think with you, senhor; it is the only means left of settling the business."

"And now the chief difficulty lies in doing it speedily, without leaving any traces of the deed. In this I expect aid from thee, Fernão, for thou art more knowing than I in work of this sort."

"I see no impossibility in doing the thing quietly."

"Speak, then; thou knowest I am no niggard in my rewards."

Rodriguez remained silent for a moment, then, after looking round him with an anxious, doubtful gaze, which rendered his hideous face still more so, he said in a half whisper: "There is a compound I know of, which makes a corpse within three days: its effects are infallible, though the symptoms are mild in appearance, defying detection, and capable of misleading the best leech in the kingdom."

"This is just the thing we want. But how is the potion to be obtained in such a wilderness as this; or even were it possible, might it not lead to surmises?"

"Leave this to my care. I should not have suggested this means, unless I had been prepared. I can administer the potion to both, this evening."

"*Pela espeda do Lidador!*" exclaimed Cabreira, hastily, and uttering his favorite oath, "wouldst thou ruin me, man. They must not both die thus in the castle; it would, to a surety, cast suspicion on me."

"We must try, then, to devise some other means; but I am at a loss to conceive any."

"I have it!" cried Cabreira, after reflecting a little; "let food be prepared for both; and do thou contrive, with thy wonted circumspection, to mix the poison in each dish. Then, as soon as it is ascertained that Vasco Peres has taken his repast, bring me word, and I will order him to be transferred, by a small detachment under thy command, to São Martinho, under color of placing him beyond the reach of his associates, which is a very plausible pretext; for as we are shortly to leave the castle, which will thus remain well nigh defenceless, it is obvious that our absence would present a most favorable opportunity for rescue of Vasco Peres by these imaginary conspirators. Thou wouldst of course remain at São Martinho with the prisoner until his death."

"An excellent idea! a most admirable contrivance!" exclaimed Rodriguez, with a frightful grin. "All is now concocted, so as to preclude any possibility of failure. There remains but one point unguarded, and still open to danger."

"'Tis the monk that troubles thee, do doubt?"

"Precisely," replied Fernão; "for you say that it was he who induced the coopers to go to Alcôa, whence it follows that he could fully prove that they were not there for the purpose of conspiring."

"True," rejoined Cabreira; "it were undoubtedly to be preferred that he too were out of the way; but this is impossible; and, moreover, when Dona Elvira and Vasco Peres are no more, the business would not be scrutinized. I am of too much importance to the king, for him to think of resuming the grant he has made me without the most evident proofs of Dona Elvira's innocence. These the monk could not furnish. He could show why the coopers went to Alcôa; he discovered my intention of going thither, but he is ignorant of the purpose I had in view, nor can he prove that I did not suspect the lady of treason."

"Think you not there is fear of his having overheard your conversation with João Gonçalves?"

"'Tis impossible; I examined every corner about the old windmill; had there been anyone near, he could not have escaped me. Besides I have not yet mentioned to thee a circumstance which reassures me entirely with respect to such a possibility. That which first drew my attention to the monk were a few words he whispered in my ear last night at the quinta; the words were these: '*Beware, Dom Garcia! I come from the Castillian camp. Juan of Castile has offered thee a large reward to betray thy master and pass over to him!*' Now, this speaks for itself. There was want of discretion at Leiria; it must have been rumored in the camp that an intention existed of sending João Gonçalves on such an errand; and the monk got his information there. But that is the amount of his knowledge."

"Yet, how could he anticipate your design of going to the quinta of Alcôa," persisted Fernão.

"The way I explain this, is that, being apprised of the proposition which had been or was to be made me, the monk, after returning to Alcobaça, must have watched my movements, and seen our departure from the castle last night. The lateness of the hour must have made him conjecture that all was not right; and on perceiving that we were treading the road to Alcôa, he no doubt hastened to communicate the intelligence to Vasco Peres. This is probable, for the coopers arrived some time after us, and must have reached the mansion by the river side. No, no, the more I reflect, the less do I apprehend danger from the monk. The only means he had of injuring me, was by reporting to His Highness the news he brought from Leiria; but fortunately the king is persuaded that I never for a moment harbored the thought of betraying his cause."

"You must admit, however, that mystery surrounds this monk. His sudden appearance this morning, and his extraordinary escape, cannot but create wonder."

"It is passing strange, how he succeeded in concealing himself so quickly and so effectually. Nevertheless, we may defy him to do his worst."

The two villains separated, quite satisfied that their scheme would prove successful, securing to them the undisputed possession of the property of their intended victims.

CHAPTER X.

"Praise a fair day at night."

Early on the following morning, the lord of Valverde was again pacing his chamber; there was impatience in his step, and expectation in his glance, as ever and anon he directed his eyes towards the door. At length it opened, and his confidant entered the room.

"How now, Fernão!" exclaimed Dom Garcia eagerly, making a stride or two in advance, "has the morning brought us better luck?"

"It grieves me much, senhor, to have to report that neither of the prisoners have eaten," replied Fernão gloomily.

Cabreira uttered a fearful oath, which need not be repeated.

"This is an unlooked for balk to our plans," continued Rodriguez; "it is not so much the delay, as the precautions necessary to prevent the menials from tasting the rejected food, and which, if continued in, may lead to surmises. Last night I directed the food to be left with them till morning; but not a particle has been touched. I have just ordered that no other be prepared for Vasco, remarking that it was quite good enough for one of his sort, and that he would find it so when the cravings of hunger came upon him. But more regard being due the lady Dona Elvira, I caused what had been set before her to be brought away, and managed to upset the whole in the corridor by jostling, as if by accident, the woman who was on her way to the kitchen with it. I then enjoined her to return and remain with the lady, recommending her to report to me as soon as Dona Elvira should signify a wish to eat, after asking what she would like to have; and when she was gone I hastily gathered up the scattered victuals, of which I have so disposed as that neither man nor brute can get at them."

"Thou hast acted with thy wonted caution, Fernão. But I marvel at this abstemiousness; it must be many hours since they have refreshed themselves."

"I begin to suspect that their guardian angels hover around them," remarked Rodriguez earnestly.

"Pshaw, man; dost thou give belief to such old wives' tales!" rejoined Cabreira, tauntingly.

"Guard your words, senhor, when alluding to matters beyond our scope. Let our wickedness be content to work on man, and respect the higher powers. Bless me, the holy martyrs St. Verissimo, Maxima and Julia! the account we shall have to render is full enough as it is; irreverence towards those of a higher sphere would only increase our guilt ten-fold, and provoke their utmost ire," said Fernão Rodriguez solemnly, for with his arch-villainy was strangely blended a large dose of superstition.

"Well, well, this is not the question now," observed Cabreira with a smile of contempt. "I marvel not so much at the lady's fast; these fair creatures are no doubt formed of a finer texture than we men. A large share of their nourishment is ministered to them by the heart, while their physical necessities are less urgent than our's. Dona Elvira must be yet too sensibly alive to all that has befallen her, to think of satisfying the calls of nature, which, however, cannot go unheeded much longer, and so, be thou on the alert. But it is passing strange this strong, hale, hearty cooper should have lived like a monk on Friday. Thinkest thou he is in love with any of the village maidens, Fernão?"

"In sooth, I know not, senhor; it may well be, though; albeit none but his pretty sister have sought admittance to him," replied Rodriguez.

"Be this as it may, he must needs soon address himself to his platter. See to this, Fernão, that we have him off as soon as may be; I dare swear we shall ere long have to march hence."

While Dom Garcia was speaking, foot-falls were heard in the passage, and a moment afterwards there was a knock at the door

"Come in," said Cabreira.

"A messenger from His Highness seeks you, senhor," said the attendant as he opened the door.

"Admit him, presently," replied the lord of Valverde.

Then, as soon as the servant had departed, Cabreira said to Rodriguez, with a look that betrayed concern:

"Orders to advance, no doubt; if they are to be acted upon without delay, we shall be in a sorry plight."

"It would play the deuse with our projects."

"Mark me, Fernão; if we must needs depart forthwith, I shall leave thee here; thou knowest wherefore," said the lord of Valverde, hurriedly, as the sound of approaching steps fell upon his ear.

An officer made his appearance; his garments were covered with dust and his face dripping with perspiration, indicating hard riding; for, notwithstanding the early hour, the sun was already very powerful, and had been so for some time.

"What tidings, fair sir? How is it with his highness and our gallant friends?" inquired Cabreira, with a courteous smile.

"All are in the best possible spirits, senhor; I was charged by his highness to put this paper in your hand;" and so saying, the officer delivered a closed package of thick, coarse paper, such as was then in use.

"With your leave, senhor," said Valverde, as he retired to the embrasure of one of the windows.

Fernão Rodriguez and the royal messenger kept their eyes fixed on Cabreira, while he cut the ribbon which fastened the document, and perused the contents of the latter. After reading for a few moments, he was seen to start; but the officer observed no further indication of surprise in the countenance or attitude of the reader, though Fernão, whose eye was more practised in interpreting his superior's expression, thought the latter's face had turned a shade paler. Well aware of the wonderful command Dom Garcia had over himself, Rodriguez augured nought of good from this circumstance.

"What were the king's orders respecting yourself, senhor?" asked Cabreira, in a quiet tone, of the officer, as he finished reading the paper, which he folded and placed in his bosom.

"To return to Porto-de-Moz forthwith; with your good leave I will but take some little refection, and depart."

"Then, pray tell His Highness that his commands are received and shall be obeyed in every point. God speed you on your journey, senhor; assure His Highness of my entire devotion to his royal person. Go thou, Fernão, and see that this gentleman be well cared for until he leave the castle."

On his return, Rodriguez found Dom Garcia striding up and down the room much agitated, and with all the signs of extreme vexation, which he made no attempt to conceal.

"Here is a pretty business! a fine upset to all that I had so carefully matured!" exclaimed he.

"What has occurred, then?" asked Fernão, anxiously.

"Only this, that both prisoners are free," replied Cabreira, gnashing his teeth.

"Free!"

"Ay, they are to be set at liberty by express command of His Highness."

"By the powers! we are discovered!" exclaimed Fernão, his face assuming a ghastly hue, as the blood receded from his yellow, parchment-colored cheeks, while his whole frame began to quake through terror.

"Coward!" cried Dom Garcia, with scorn.

"'Tis well for you, senhor, to speak thus; your birth and rank will save your neck; but mine already feels the twitch of the halter," said the wretch, rubbing his throat convulsively.

"Cease, fool! things are not yet come to that pass."

"Say you so, noble sir!" cried Rodriguez, with eager hope. "But no, no; it cannot be. First, the king has them placed in custody; then, the very next day, he orders their release. It is plain, he either knows or suspects the truth. We have been betrayed!"

"By whom? by thyself, peradventure? ha! ha! ha!"

"By Satan, in that monk's shape!"

"Tush, man; rouse thyself. But, in truth, why should I play the scoffer? at first the same thought occurred to me."

"I admire your calmness; you showed no more trepidation than a martyr who seeks death at the hands of the Moors. And pray what has reassured you?"

"Thou shalt know. The king's letter runs more or less as follows: that upon reflection, he considers the confiscation of the estates of Dona Elvira sufficient punishment; that, shorn of her wealth, she can do little or no harm; and that in consideration of the good services of her late uncle, he would not treat her too harshly, wherefore he orders her instant liberation. Touching Vasco Peres, His Highness directs that he be surrendered to the Abbot of Alcobaça, whose vassal he is, in order that the abbot may act in his case according to his own judgment; as he, the prelate, had laid a complaint against the seizure of his vassal, requesting that he be delivered to him, and promising that he would stand surety for the cooper's good behavior."

"Thus, Vasco's property will never be mine," said Rodriguez, sullenly.

"Nay, thou shalt this day take possession thereof. The king, in the same letter, confirms the grant he made me of the property of Dona Elvira and Vasco Peres. Lastly he commands me to lead my troops to Aljubarrota to-morrow at sunrise; he himself sets out from Porto-de-Moz an hour before we are to start hence. It is therefore clear that the king entertains no suspicions against me. Mem Forjaz was always well esteemed by His Highness, and this accounts for his lenity towards the niece. As to Vasco Peres, the abbot has manifestly taken umbrage at the king's proceeding, in not having consulted him before deciding a case in which one of his vassals was concerned; and, though the sovereign has a perfect right to act by his single authority in a case of high treason, yet no doubt he preferred to give this mark of deference to the proud and powerful prelate, whom he could not afford to annoy just now."

In connection with the latter part of this speech, it may be well to remark, that at the beginning of the struggle between Dom João of Avis and the King of Castile, the Abbott of Alcobaça, Dom João d'Ornellas, had shown partiality for the latter, whom he furnished with provisions for his army when Don Juan of Castile passed through Alcobaça on his march against Lisbon, before the siege. But later, when the Grand-Master of Avis was proclaimed king at Coimbra—not quite four months preceding the date of our story—the abbot had taken sides with the newly elected king; and a day or two before the events I am now recording, he had sent his brother, Martim d'Ornellas, with a considerable body of troops to join the royal army. It was therefore quite natural that the king should take heed not to displease so powerful a personage at such a crisis.

"All this is very plausible, senhor," said Fernão Rodriguez, not at all satisfied with the prospect, in as far as his own interests were concerned; "all this is very plausible, and I make no doubt but you take a correct view of the matter; yet withal I greatly fear that Vasco Peres will prevail upon my lord the abbot, who knows him well, to obtain from the king the restitution of his property."

"Never fear, Fernão; His Highness will think twice before he do aught to indispose me. But granting he did, thou shouldst not be the loser; I would more than make good the loss to thee."

"Well, senhor," rejoined Fernão, better pleased, "I am satisfied. When you are content, I am bound to be so, likewise."

"But I am far from being contented, Fernão. Here is my scheme suddenly become impracticable; for in a few minutes Dona Elvira will be out of my power.—I cannot thus consent to give up all for lost; some other means must be devised."

"To bring about her death?"

"Precisely."

"With your leave, I'll make bold to say that the business is an easier one to deal with now, than erewhile."

"I see not why; how canst thou administer the potion to her after she will have left the castle?"

"She need not perforce die by poison; there are other ways of dispatching people, and making shorter work of it. Then, you have this advantage, that suspicion will not so easily attach to you; for it will appear that had you had the will of making away with her, you would have effected it while she was within your reach."

"This is true in one sense; but here's the rub, how can it be brought about so as to preclude the possibility of detection, whether the attempt succeed or prove a failure?"

"If you are content to leave the matter in my hands, Dona Elvira shall have breathed her last ere we quit Alcobaça, without fear of discovery," said Rodriguez in a tone of assurance.

"What makes thee so positive?"

"Leave this to me."

"Wilt thou give me a surety that under no circumstances the deed can be traced home to me?"

"I repeat, you need give yourself no concern. Caution needs no rein with me. Believe me, I have as great an inducement to guard against detection as yourself, fair sir."

"Good, I know thy discretion, and to it I entrust the whole business. And Vasco Peres?"

"As regards him, I can give no assurance, unless they can both be dispatched at one stroke; but this is doubtful. I'll answer for it, that either can be reached, but I dare not promise that both can."

"If a choice must needs be made, look to it that Dona Elvira escape not; she is the greatest obstacle in my path. Vasco might prove troublesome no doubt, but not in any dangerous degree, once we get rid of the Lady of Runa. If he live, and get back his property, as he probably would, thou knowest my agreement to compensate thee; so have no care about this."

"There is one thing indispensable, and without which nothing could be done."

"Name it."

"Money."

"How much is required?"

"Ten doubloons will do for the present."

"I'll give them to thee now."

"And if all go well, about as much again may be needed."

"The sum will be paid; thou shalt have the twenty doubloons presently. But beware, Fernão, how thou open thyself to another, for I see this money is not for thee; if failure ensue, torture would wring a confession from thy instrument."

"I was not blind to this danger, senhor; but let this suffice, that none can reveal more than they know."

The Lord of Valverde appeared satisfied with the reply of his hideous agent, and a few minutes later delivered him the amount. Cabreira then gave directions for the liberation of Elvira, and commanded Vasco Peres to be removed from prison and given up to the abbot.

CHAPTER XI.

"When bale is hext, boot is next."

A great change had taken place in Elvira's situation since last we saw her; then, only a few hours before, she was at liberty, respected, the mistress of vast estates; now she was a close prisoner, despoiled of all her worldly means, and would doubtless soon be forgotten, even were she to be released; at least, so she thought. Elvira was, in many respects, but an inexperienced girl. Till within a few months, she had been accustomed to look up to her uncle for aid and counsel; and the short time which had elapsed since his death had been passed in solitude in a way little calculated to school her in the art of life or warn her of the shoals and quicksands that lie in the path of man; indeed, the last forty-eight hours had been to her, in more than one way, the opening, as it were, of a new world.

Yet she had experience enough to realize the horror of her present position. She stood accused of a crime from the consequences of which she had heard but very few escaped after denunciation. She was innocent, the victim of foul slander and calumny; but was she a solitary example? True, a few had obtained redress and retrieved their credit and station in the world through the intercession of influential friends; but whom had she to look to, now her uncle was gone? What influence had a forlorn damsel, isolated by reason of the state of the country, which had in a great degree dissolved the ties of social intercourse, to bring to bear against the patronage and consideration possessed by her foe and despoiler? She was even unacquainted with the king, whom she had seen once or twice at Lisbon, but without being known to him. She threw no blame upon him; she knew from report that he was liberal and amiable. She was aware that he was in a critical position, coping with a powerful rival, surrounded on all sides by traitors or lukewarm partizans (which fact was given out at the time in the following simile: *that all the teeth of João of Avis were loose, except one*, and this one represented the trusty constable, Nuno Alvares Pereira), forced to yield to their cupidity, and, having nought to give save what he took from others, it was quite natural he should take from those upholding a foreign power. Could it be expected that at such a crisis he would find the time to investigate fully every case? Nay, was it to be wondered at that his mind was easily open to suspicion? Then, as to the future, Elvira saw but little reason to hope. She suspected that it would be long ere public affairs were sufficiently settled for her to obtain a hearing, and then the scene would have shifted; she might probably find it difficult to produce conclusive proofs of her innocence in opposition to the insidious manœuvers of the Lord of Valverde; plausible circumstances might be brought forward which, even granting their insufficiency for obtaining condemnation in the first instance, would prove ample to put the seal to an accomplished fact. Such was the train of thought which Elvira indulged, after she had recovered from the first shock attendant upon her sudden reverse of fortune.

But amidst all these glimmerings of an uncertain future, ever and anon there shone through the openings of the heavy clouds a few luminous beams, and then she saw the handsome features and the noble form of her preserver, and then the retentive faculties of the brain sent back to her ear the deep pathos of his voice. There stood Vasco Peres, not as the humble cooper; but as one in every wise competent to grace the higher stations among men, and as if destined by nature for a brilliant career in life; and Elvira would gaze upon the vision with feelings of delight, till it melted away and gave place to a prison-scene, in which Vasco appeared loaded down with chains. Then the noble-hearted girl, forgetting her own misfortunes, would bemoan the ruin she had unwittingly brought upon a fellow-creature.

We may better conceive than describe the feelings that came upon Elvira when the news of her liberation was suddenly broken to her. During the first few moments she uttered not a word; the blood went to and from her cheeks, and she was obliged to seek a support, for her limbs seemed to refuse to perform their functions. This effect was mainly attributable to the weak state of her nerves, which had been put to a severe test of late, and moreover to debility from want of nourishment.

"And Vasco Peres, is he also free?" asked she at length, with a certain eagerness of tone.

"He is not free, lady; but orders have been received to have him transferred to the custody of my lord the abbot," replied the officer.

Elvira's face fell; but she murmured, as if speaking to herself, "better there, than here." This was, because, being acquainted with the abbot, she hoped her intercessions in his behalf might prove successful.

"And where am I to go? Can I return to Alcoa?"

"Nay, lady," answered the officer in a tone of compassion; "Senhor Dom Garcia bade me say that he would have done himself the honor of attending you personally, but for the promise he made you, and charged me to inform you that you are at liberty to go whithersoever you will, so it be to none of those places that were once yours."

"Ah! I see; I am no longer a prisoner, yet little better than one—an outcast upon the world!" said Elvira with a bitter smile. "Yet 'tis better thus; I'd sooner be anywhere than under the eye of my present jailer. Pray lead me forth, with all speed."

She uttered not another syllable, but followed the man with a hurried, agitated step, insomuch that the latter was obliged to quicken his pace. It seemed to her as if she could not take another breath in this hated place; she fled like one that seeks to escape from an infected spot in order not to drink in the poison floating in the air. In the court, were a number of soldiers conversing in groups or lounging about in different directions, and Elvira, with the modesty of her sex, hurriedly drew the veil over her face, that the latter might not be made a target for their bold glances. As she issued from the outer gate she heaved a sigh, drew a long breath, and would perhaps have sank to the ground, had she not been caught in the arms of one who stood there unperceived.

"God be praised! that I see you free again, sweet lady. I have been waiting for you full half an hour."

It was the tender and loving Violante. Elvira, whose heart had been oppressed for so many hours, fell upon the neck of her faithful companion and gave a free passage to her tears; but her utterance was choked by her emotion. It seemed so long since she had any one near her in whom she found sympathy.

"What brought thee hither, dearest Violante?" asked she, at last.

"To meet you, lady."

"And is this new change in my affairs become so public, that it had already reached you?"

"I cannot say how far it is known abroad; but I was told to come and wait for you by one who knew of it."

"Who, then?"

"Nay, be patient; come with me and you shall see," replied Violante, with an arch smile.

"And whither am I to go? I have no home now, dearest girl, no more than thou hast?"

"Have no anxiety on that score, senhora; all is prepared for your reception. The place is poor; but nowhere will you meet with a heartier welcome. Braz Martinz gave me shelter, and now makes free to offer you as much. Do you consent to go to so humble an abode?"

"And pray what am I now, that I should show aught of pride in my demeanor? The good Braz is more to be envied than I; he need trouble no one for alms while he has hands to work; but alas! what hope remains to me save that of charity?" Elvira sighed, and her lovely countenance wore a look so melancholy and forlorn as would have touched the hardest heart with pity. Violante could restrain her tears no longer.

"Be of good cheer, sweet lady," said she, "you have more friends than you wot of; if some can but sympathize with your misfortunes, there are others, at least one, who may find means to minister better comfort to you. Come, senhora, come," and the tender girl took Elvira's hand and led her away.

After reaching the bottom of the declivity which led from the castle, they had not very far to go; as Braz's house was among those that bordered the great square in front of the monastery. It was built of stone, and was limited to one story on a level with the ground. The first room was unfloored and deprived of windows, receiving light only through the square opening cut in the upper part of the door and furnished with a shutter; this served as general sitting and eating room, on either side of which was a door leading into two bedrooms. Opposite the entrance was another door which led into the kitchen, which, like the outer room, could only boast of the bare ground. Finally, to the right of the kitchen was a third bedroom, very small, but with a flooring, with which the other two sleeping apartments were likewise provided. The furniture in the outer room was in keeping with the place, composed merely of a small deal table, a few stools, and an enormous wooden trunk or chest, resting on two small stands, and taking up more than a third of the space. But, notwithstanding the deficiency of comforts, which was not felt in a climate that invited people to live more in the open air than indoors, everything bore a neat and tidy appearance, while the bare, unplastered walls were as white as milk, from frequent whitewashing.

Standing at the entrance of the cot, as if waiting for her guests, was Porquéria, the wife of Braz Martinz, a nice, kindly-looking woman, of about forty-five years of age, poorly, but cleanly clad. As soon as she perceived the two young persons crossing the square, she advanced to meet them.

"*Oh, minha rica senhora!*" cried Porquéria, seizing Elvira's hand, which she pressed to her lips; "this is, indeed, a sad sight for those who have so often felt your bounty. O, my heart is ready to burst!" and the poor woman began to shed tears.

"Weep not, my good Porquéria;" for Elvira knew her, as in truth she knew all the neighboring peasants by name; "you see I come to claim a small corner of your house. Will you give me hospitality for awhile?" and the lady's smile was mournful, and her tone was gentle.

"Bless me, lady! is it for you to ask? Is it not for us to beg of you to rest in our poor home till you get a better?"

"Nay, my good friend, I am no longer what I was."

"Hush, lady, hush! speak not thus! In our eyes you are what you ever were. But come, this broiling sun will do you no good; you are weak, *coitada!*" and so saying, the good woman showed the way into her little house.

There, sitting upon a stool, with his elbow resting upon the table, sat a monk: it was frei Lopo. Elvira had never before seen his features, but they had been described to her by Violante, and, moreover, a sort of instinct presently convinced her that this was no other than the mysterious monk himself. As they entered, the latter made a sign to Porquéria, who instantly drew back and left the house.

"Frei Lopo! Ah, I see! It was you, good father, who reclaimed me from the hands of the jailer. O, thanks! a thousand thanks!" cried Elvira, advancing hastily, and kissing the hem of the monk's sleeve.

"It was the king, my daughter, who commanded your release," said frei Lopo, after giving his benediction and rising from his seat. The face of the venerable man wore a melancholy smile, and Elvira perceived a tear trickling down his wrinkled cheek, as he gazed upon her with a gentle, benevolent look.

"I make no doubt thereof, but it was through your intercession. Don't deny it, father. Was it not so?"

"I cannot say I *interceded* for you, though I must not deny having had some share in your liberation."

"This I was sure of, father; my heart told it me, for, ever since trouble visited my once quiet home, you have been, as it were, the bugbear of despair and the harbinger of deliverance. I know it was through your timely warning that I was saved from the hands of a villain, albeit you would not stay to let me thank you."

"Mention it not, daughter; my incentive was not the coveting of gratitude."

"And could you not also succeed in obtaining the liberty of Vasco Peres, to whom I owe so much? I hear he has but changed jailers, that he is now the abbot's prisoner."

"You will see him ere long, here, in this very house." As the monk spoke these words, Elvira's heart throbbed violently, and her cheeks turned to a crimson hue. She felt the glow upon them, and this increased her confusion, which seemed to vex her. Was it that Elvira thought it a reproach to show trouble at the mention of one so far beneath her in point of birth, or rather, might she not have been moved by that reluctance which woman often feels to discover what passes in the secret recess of her heart?

"Father," said she, smiling, after a moment's pause, "you will say, peradventure, that I am like most of my sex, when I tell you that you have greatly excited my curiosity. There is something unaccountable in your movements, and in the knowledge you have of things which were supposed to be secrets."

"And yet methinks there are many things stranger in this world of ours," remarked frei Lopo, with a bland smile.

"But pray how did you discover the subterranean passage at the quinta? Perhaps you are fond of rambling about the country, and may perchance have stumbled on the entrance? though I remember not to have met you before."

"These are idle words of yours, daughter. What will it avail you to know how I gained that knowledge, since it was used for your benefit?"

Although frei Lopo spoke in a mild and gentle, nay, even playful tone, Elvira perceived a rebuke and ventured to insist no further.

"I crave your pardon, father," said she; "but may I at least ask whether the king is assured of my innocence, and if so, why he should evince such want of justice as to cut me off from all my possessions, thus casting a weak and helpless female upon the world?"

"Alas! daughter, yours is a difficult case to deal with."

"But you know that I am innocent of the foul calumny brought against me and Vasco Peres?" said Elvira, with the energy of conscious rectitude.

"I am more than convinced that you are both blameless."

"Father, I know not who you are; but you undoubtedly possess some influence, and you have shown yourself a friend to my interests; could you not have made it clear to His Highness that I was the victim of the most atrocious machinations?"

"You ascribe to me more power than I can in reality boast of; I am but a simple monk, whose duty it is to support virtue and battle against the artifices of the Evil One. But I think I can put your mind at ease, respecting the good opinion His Highness bears towards you."

"Then you think he will restore me my estates?"

"Nay, I went not so far as to say that; there seem to be some insurmountable obstacles in the way."

"How! Would the king, when satisfied that I have done nought against his service, think of leaving me in this situation, withholding from me that which he has so unjustifiably taken from me? This were more than infamous; it were past naming!" cried Elvira, with an outburst of indignation.

"Hereafter you may think otherwise; blame not the king; for he is good and generous," replied frei Lopo, quietly.

"I understand you not, father; it passes my skill to get at your meaning," said Elvira, casting a look of wonder on the monk, who only smiled, remaining silent.

"But what troubles me sorely," continued she, "is that there should be another innocent one suffering on my account."

"You allude to Vasco Peres?"

"Yes; I am the cause of his ruin."

"Oh, as to him, have no concern. I have not the slightest doubt that ere long the king will know him better, and amend the evil that has befallen him."

"I thank you from my heart, father, for this good promise; it will lighten the burden of my own woes," and Elvira's expression vouched for the sincerity of her words.

"But, father," said Violante, with some petulancy, "why should his highness be more partial towards my brother than towards this noble, persecuted lady? Methinks this is neither just nor gallant."

"Maiden," returned frei Lopo, "it is not for one like thee to presume to criticise the acts of a monarch. There are many things which seem strange and unaccountable to wiser heads than thine, and which are, withal, none the less open to a fair interpretation. And now, daughter," continued he, addressing Elvira, "you must be in want of a little quiet to refresh your spirits, and I have certain matters to attend to without."

So saying the monk took his leave, and he was no sooner gone ere Porquéria came in, and set about preparing some food for her noble guest.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

A BAD GOOD MAN.

"A good man," was he?

He was good in a sense. That is, many of the elements that God put into his nature worked in a good way, at least so far as they had any relation to this life. He was kind, he was generous, he was tireless in his labors for what he *thought* to be the good of man. But *the better he was the more harm he did.*

"How can that be?"

Why, suppose you have children, and you, knowing things which it is impossible for them to learn or to understand, see not only that all ways but one will lead them to destruction, but see also the whole reason *why* this is so. And suppose you tell your children the facts in the case, show them the one safe road, and command and urge them to keep carefully to that. And now suppose that one of your children, unable to see the reason for all this anxiety to stay in the appointed way, concludes that he *won't* stay there, nor allow others to do so, if his influence will get them out. He accordingly forsakes the path in which you desire to lead him, and spends his life and strength in efforts to draw others after him. Now what if he is the most beautiful, the most talented, the most interesting, attractive, and influential of all your children? What if he is generous to a fault, and ready to sacrifice time, labor, life itself, for what accords with his own notions of good? Would not all these minor virtues serve to endear him more and more to his brothers, and thus enable him to do harm which a less lovely character, even with twice the will and effort, would fail to accomplish? Would you call such a rebel a good child?

So long as he was destitute of the *foundation virtue* of obedience to his father's just commands, would not all lesser virtues do harm as well as good? and so long as he made use of the native or acquired graces in his possession to draw his brothers out of the safe path, might it not truly be said of him, "The better he was the more harm he did?"

C. S.

◆

MINISTERING SPIRITS.

BY TAMAR ANNE KERMODE.

Do angels guard our footsteps?—do they keep
Their silent vigils while we calmly sleep?
When morning's twilight brightens into day,
When sunset's radiant colors fade away;
In all our hours of joyfulness and glee,
In all our moments of despondency;
Do they watch o'er us with untiring care,
Soothe the heart's yearnings, keep it from despair?
Do they with gentle, strong, invisible bands,
Fold the meek penitent's weary trembling hands?
List' to the murmuring sobs, the imperfect lays,
Take up to Heaven the songs of prayer and praise;
How blessed is the thought—that by our side,
Pure Angel forms will ever softly glide;
O God! my God!—my Father and my King,
Accept *my* prayers, *my* praise, *my* offering;
Still let thy Ministering Spirits be
Around my path—drawing me near to thee,
Guiding me onward to a bright Eternity.

◆

SOWING AND REAPING.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE STEPMOTHER," "MINNIGREY," ETC., ETC

CHAPTER XLVII.

Hence we shall see,
If power change purpose, what our seemers be.
SHAKSPEARE.

There was a half suppressed smile and a vindictive lighting up of the eyes when one of the clerks announced to Sir Jasper Mansell that his old friend, Mr. Harper, had arrived, and requested to see him.

"At once admit him. At once!" exclaimed the wounded man, clutching, as he spoke, the bills and acceptances which bore the signature of his visitor. "I am ready, *quite ready to receive him.* Harold," he added, as the clerk quitted the room, "you had better retire—our conference must pass without witnesses; not that I doubt, or hesitate to trust you, but would spare you the sad sight of two old men's degradation. Do not leave the bank. I shall soon require your presence."

"As you please, uncle," replied our hero, gathering up the letters he had been reading; "but these I must take with me, I cannot part with them."

"Ah! I perceive! Mrs. Imray's correspondence with Clement Chambers; do as you please, I have no further use for them. They served my turn."

Mr. Harper entered the private office with an air very different from the one he wore on his last visit. His bearing then was erect and insolent—his words haughty and menacing; and he strode into the room as if the world were beneath his feet. Now he crept gently, and tried to mould his ignoble features into an expression of something like sympathy. He had gleaned quite enough from the cashier and clerks to feel assured that the long-missing desk was in the possession of their master.

"How the cur winces when he finds the hand he would have bitten armed with the lash," thought the baronet, as he marked the change.

"My dear Sir Jasper," said the hypocrite, "this is a very sad affair! I trust you are not seriously injured. Have you sent——"

"Mortally," interrupted the dying man. "The three days you gave me have expired."

"Yes—I know; but we will not speak of business now. I was a little intemperate, perhaps; but you can make allowance for a father's feelings. The marriage, under present circumstances, had better be postponed."

"My son is already married," observed the banker, in the same cold, sarcastic tone he had hitherto spoken in.

The countenance of Mr. Harper changed to a billious hue—then suddenly reddened; and he was about to indulge in passionate reproaches, if not threats, when he caught the eye of the speaker fixed upon his—not hopelessly or imploringly, as before, but with a triumphant expression, and the words faltered upon his lips.

"Married to Lady Selina," added Sir Jasper.

"Indeed!" muttered his visitor, half choking with rage.

"A match I now approve of in every respect. As the heir of my baronetcy and the godson of a royal duke, Augustus was entitled to look higher than a mere City alliance, and chose for himself."

"With your consent, of course?" observed the former, bitterly.

"No; I have not even the consolation of having sanctioned it."

"In that case," interrupted Harper, who saw that his power over the dying man was nearly at an end, "we may continue friends."

"Friends!" repeated the banker, with an energy that startled him; "friends! Scorn has no words to express how utterly I loathe and despise you. Friends with the reptile who took advantage of my crime to screen himself from poverty and infamy; and having achieved his own vile safety, held it as a menace over me! Friends with a coward, who had not the courage to strike the blow himself, but, faithful to his currish instincts, lapped the blood he had not the nerve to shed! Aye, look," he continued; "fret, fume, wear heart out with impotent rage! I can defy your malice. I told you, when you pushed me beyond endurance, how vast a change the pressure of a finger upon the trigger of a pistol might make. *It has made it.* But the papers of Clement are in my hands."

"*All?*"

"*All!*" replied Sir Jasper, significantly.

Heavy drops of perspiration stood upon the brow of his visitor, who leant his arms upon one of the desks, and buried his face in his hands. The dying man contemplated his shame and terror with extreme satisfaction.

They were the only drops of honey in his cup of bitterness.

Here it may be as well, for the information of our readers, to enter more minutely into the nature of the transactions in which, in early life, the speakers had been mutually engaged.

Both were the sons of wealthy City men, and despised the prudent, methodical, business habits of their fathers, content to follow the slow but certain road to wealth. The sons fancied they had discovered a royal one, and speculated largely; not in their own names, which would quickly have been blown upon on 'Change, but in that of the unfortunate clerk, Clement Chambers, who lent himself to their proceedings, in the hope of realizing a fortune. As may be supposed, the operations in the money market of two inexperienced young men naturally proved failures. To meet their engagements the most questionable means were resorted to—fictitious securities, forgeries. In this stage of their proceedings Clement, the least guilty of the three, suffered most severely; the suspicion cast upon his reputation cost him the love of the girl to whom he was engaged to be married, and who afterwards bestowed her hand on Zachariah Imray.

Once entered on the slippery path of crime, it is difficult to retrace our steps. Strong resolution may accomplish it—a weak one, never. For several years the wretched speculators lived in all the agonies of guilty terror. The crisis came at last, and Jasper Mansell—who had been sent by his father to Paris on business connected with the firm—received a letter from his confederate, informing him that unless ten thousand pounds were procured in ten days, exposure would be inevitable.

An hour after receiving the information he was in a *chaise de poste*, on his way to Calais, where he embarked in a sailing-packet, commanded by Captain Riddle, for Dover.

It was night when the guilty man arrived in London; haunted by remorse and fear, he made his way to the bank, where Clement and Mark Chambers resided. The latter, unfortunately, had absented himself to visit a dying friend, so that the two men—the tempted and the tempter—when they met, found themselves alone.

The clerk learned, for the first time, that the securities he had assisted to put in circulation were forgeries. In his despair and indignation, he refused to give up the correspondence that had passed between them, and other papers contained in his desk—the proposal to rob the bank he treated with scorn; a violent quarrel ensued—then a struggle, and last a blow.

On the following morning it was discovered that a double crime had been committed. Clement Chambers was found murdered, and a large sum in gold and notes missing from the strong room, of which he had the keys.

Although no one suspected Jasper Mansell of being the assassin, rumors speedily got afloat, reflecting on the credit of the firm; but as friends came forward, and every engagement was honorably met, they gradually died away.

As for the desk, the murderer buried it at the foot of the old tree in the court-yard, together with many of the securities which had been forged ready for circulation. It also contained its unhappy owner's correspondence with the wife of Mr. Imray—letters written to him before her marriage. Several of these the guilty man abstracted; he already saw a use for them.

Whether the inequality of the pavement, or the circumstance of his detecting his young master more than once stamping upon the stones, as if to beat them down, first excited the suspicion of old Mark, would be difficult to ascertain. One thing is certain, he discovered the buried desk, and, convinced that the assassin would one day return to disinter it, watched over it with the fidelity of affection and the perseverance of vengeance. As we have seen, the result justified his calculations.

As he had sown, so did the murderer reap!

All the forgeries, save one, had been cautiously withdrawn from circulation by the two forgers: but the gold stolen from the strong room was exhausted. The notes they dared not offer; the numbers were known and cancelled by the Bank of England, on the security of Zachariah Imray and other friends of the firm. Jasper was at his wits' end. In his despair he wrote as follows to his companion in crime:—

> "For Heaven's sake obtain cash for the inclosed notes of one thousand pounds each, Nos. 18,329, 18,330, or ruin, exposure, and disgrace are inevitable. I am nearly mad. Contrive some means. In three months I shall be able to redeem them. Yours truly, JASPER MANSELL."

Whilst his confederate was pondering how to comply with this request, a message arrived from his father's country seat in the suburbs of London, with a letter. Mr. Harper, senior, had expired of a fit of apoplexy just as he was about starting for the City.

The last difficulty vanished—the son became head of the firm. Ten minutes after receiving the intelligence, he wrote a cheque for the amount, and forwarded it to Jasper, whose letter, and the notes inclosed in it, he locked carefully in the iron chest in his office.

The application was incautiously worded. It placed the writer completely in his power.

Shortly afterwards the father of the assassin also died, and he succeeded not only to the baronetcy, but to the banking business, and an enormous sum in ready money. One clause in the banker's will, however, defeated all his joy. Mark Chambers was to inhabit the rooms looking into the court for life. His master had left them, at the old man's earnest entreaty, as a legacy, in reward for his long and faithful services.

Our readers know the rest. The new baronet never ventured near the withered tree but he found the eyes of Mark watching him. Often, when the menaces of his partner in the forgeries galled his pride, stung him almost to madness, their cold, stony glance proved sufficient to calm him. He would have given half his wealth to have obtained possession of the desk, knowing that it contained proofs to criminate Harper in all but the deed of blood, as deeply as himself. He had obtained them at last, and in the first flush of triumph over his persecutor, scarcely regretted the penalty.

A few words more and we have, for some time, at least, done with our retrospection of the past. The assassin, who presented himself at the inquest, swore that he landed in England the morning *after* the murder, and neither the coroner nor jury doubted the word of so respectable a person as the son of the head of the great banking-house of Mansell and Company. But there was one person who doubted it—Captain Riddle, the commander of the packet-boat that brought him from Calais; he had his log-book to prove that Jasper had crossed the Channel a day sooner than he had stated, in ample time to be in London on the night of the crime. The fellow saw that money was to be made of the fact, and hastened up to London.

In vain the guilty man denied the accuracy of his statement, sought to persuade the captain he had mistaken the date; that even, if incorrect in his own recollection of the day, it was of no material consequence. The only answer he received was his visitor pointing to the log.

They speedily came to an understanding—the accusing page was torn out and burnt, but not till a considerable sum had been paid.

On becoming head of the firm, Riddle was frequently employed by his former passenger—who never lost sight of him. The baronet proved as good as an annuity to him.

"I am passing beyond the reach of human justice," observed the baronet; "you are still within its grasp. The opinion of mankind, their execrations and contempt, in a few brief hours, will no more affect me than the wind that whistles over my grave. With you," he continued, "it is different; you are a strong man—have years of life before you—its ambitious and enjoyment. Only to think," he added, holding up the forgeries, "that these pieces of paper—with half-a-dozen names scrawled on them—can blast your prospects!"

Harper shuddered visibly.

"How they will chuckle in the City!" muttered the speaker. "I think I hear them on 'Change, where you have held your head so high. The Pharisees of the money market will be at a discount for a long time to come."

At every word uttered by the dying man his hearer seemed to shrink still further into himself; he sat, the cold perspiration trickling down his parchment-colored cheeks, gazing on him in speechless terror. Never was human being ever more completely humbled, more subdued.

"Jasper," he exclaimed at last, "you would never have the inhumanity. We have been friends."

A hoarse laugh interrupted him.

"Inhumanity!" repeated the banker in a hissing tone. "We shall have Cain preaching of mercy, Judas pleading fidelity, next. How the devil we have both served must chuckle as he listens to us! After all, the murderer's fate will be better than the forger's. I shall escape the gallows."

"For Heaven's sake," exclaimed the horrified wretch, "don't utter that dreadful word!"

"Why not?" demanded Sir Jasper, coolly. "Nothing like familiarizing yourself with the idea. You have been sheriff," he added, with a burst of fiend-like mirth, for the recollection tickled him; "and have watched the last looks of the wretch trembling at the scaffold's foot, despairing alike of heaven and earth—the wild, hopeless glance he cast upon you as you stood in your purple robe and chain, a respectale mockery, an incarnate lie, whose real place was beside him. An ex-sheriff!" he continued; "the hangman does not often try his craft upon such subjects. How consoling the chaplain will be; how respectful the officials; how solemn your successors in office. The recollection that the thing they have just launched into eternity once wore the golden chain and purple rag will damp their appetites at the breakfast."

At the period we are writing of, the sheriffs of London and their *visitors* breakfasted in Newgate directly after an execution. The custom, we believe, of late years has been abolished.

During this dreadful description, Harper sat, cowering like some reptile, driven into a corner; and, hopeless of escape, his teeth chattered wildly, making the only music he could now appreciate—the music of revenge—to the ears of the speaker. Despair at last nerved his hearer with the semblance of courage, and, starting to his feet, he exclaimed:

"You dare not, Sir Jasper! you dare not."

"Dare not!" repeated the baronet, contemptuously.

"No! you have a son."

"Who has disobeyed me," replied the dying man, with singular calmness; "whose obstinacy in refusing to bestow his name upon the parchment-colored, conceited girl, whom you call your daughter, has caused my death."

His former confederate in crime must have been greatly under the influence of terror not to have resented this insulting description of his darling child.

"You have daughters," he urged.

"Who will be rich," said Sir Jasper. "Marriage changes names."

"And a wife," added Harper.

"There too I have an advantage over you," replied the dying man. "You fear yours. I only despise mine."

His visitor regarded him for several minutes in silence, reflecting on his own critical position all the while. Gradually it appeared less desperate to him. Great and manifold as were the causes the baronet had received both to hate and despise him, he could not believe that for an insensate revenge, he would refuse all offers of accomodation, and heap upon his children's name an inheritance of infamy.

"Jasper," he began, "I confess I might have used the power circumstances once gave me over you more mercifully, but I was misled by the desire of allying our families, uniting the fortunes we have acquired. It is for you to show more generosity than I did."

"Generosity! pitiless, savage, and coarse as pitiless."

"Name your conditions," added Harper. "I place myself without reservation in your hands, submit to whatever terms you may dictate."

"Ring that bell," said the banker.

Harper unhesitatingly obeyed.

It was answered by John Ledger. The old man had a bewildered look. He could not comprehend how such an unlooked-for event could have occurred to any respectable firm. A bankruptcy would not have surprised him more.

"You will find a private account-book in that desk," said his employer, pointing to the one he meant.

The chashier opened it mechanically.

"Make out the account of Mr. Harper," continued the baronet, "money lent, and bring it to me as soon as you have finished it."

"Directly, Sir Jasper."

"And send for a Bow street officer."

"There has been one all the morning upon the premises," observed Mr. Ledger.

"Very well, that will do."

At the mention of a Bow street officer the countenance of his visitor changed, and he began to look around him uneasily.

"The money you have extorted from me at various times," said Sir Jasper, "must be repaid."

"Agreed."

"It amounts to fifty thousand pounds."

"Yes, probably, about that sum."

"Repaid, with interest."

"Agreed," repeated Harper, somewhat more slowly than before, as if the word had been wrung by torture from his unwilling lips.

"And the letter, together with the two notes for a thousand pounds each, which you have so long held in terror over me, given up."

"That also I consent to."

"You have them with you," observed the banker. "You hesitate. I will not give you time to hatch a lie. I am certain you have them. The hangman would not come without his cord; nor you without the instruments of extortion. Remember that I have no time for child's play."

At the allusion to the last officer of the law all hesitation on the part of Mr. Harper disappeared, and he answered straightforwardly and promptly:

"I have them."

"I knew so," ejaculated the banker, with a smile.

Nothing passed between the speakers till John Ledger returned with the account. It amounted to fifty-three thousand pounds.

"Without interest?" said his master, when he had named the sum.

"Without interest, Sir Jasper."

"Calculate that."

A few moments sufficed. Although the accounts were rather complicated, the money having been advanced at various times, the experienced cashier went rapidly through them.

"Exactly fifty-nine thousand pounds, seventeen shillings, and eight pence, Sir Jasper."

"Draw bills at three, six, and nine months for the amount, in equal proportions," said his employer. "Return with them, and witness Mr. Harper's signature."

The bills were drawn and signed, the acceptor, however, retaining them in his possession. The two partners in crime were then left by themselves.

"Harper," said the dying man, "security for security; hand me the notes, my letter, and the acceptances, and take back your forgeries."

It was a curious sight to witness the countenances of the men as the exchange was made—each doubtful of the other till he grasped the proofs of his culpability safely in his possession. The baronet thrust his into the open drawer in the table before him. It closed with a spring lock. His brother felon walked deliberately towards the fire, examined his forgeries one by one, dropped them into the flames, and stood by till they were consumed.

When the light blue vapor of the burning paper had ceased, and the last vestige was destroyed, he turned suddenly round, and, folding his arms, gazed with looks of mingled rage and defiance upon the banker.

The latter smiled disdainfully.

"Murderer!" he exclaimed.

"Forger!" said Jasper.

"You have no proof."

"Have you?"

"There is another world," whispered the little wretch, glaring on the dying man with eyes sparkling like those of an angry viper; "a heaven, a hell!—recollect that—a hell!" he repeated; "be that your punishment!"

If the assassin of Clement Chambers felt the taunt, he would not afford his enemy the satisfaction of witnessing the pang it caused him; on the contrary, he regarded him with a look as terrible and menacing as his own.

"Leave me!" he exclaimed.

"When I please, Sir Jasper Mansell—not before," replied Harper with a sneer. "Knave, rascal, murderer, as you are, you will admit that I have paid handsomely for the pleasure of this interview."

"Leave me!" repeated the baronet, a smile stealing gradually over his pallid countenance; "I have not yet examined *all* the papers in the desk."

Harper started as if a serpent had stung him.

"Perhaps there are other letters," added the speaker, sneeringly. "I know you were a frequent correspondent; *possibly I may discover another forgery.*"

"Forgive me!" murmured his visitor, in his former tone of abject submission. "I am half mad, I know not what I utter. Half my fortune gone!"

Sir Jasper Mansell pointed sternly to the door.

"I do not believe there are any," continued the speaker, wildly; "but at this distance of time, should there be, act generously by me—think of my position in the City, my wife and child."

"Begone!" said the banker, loathingly; "another word, and if accident gives me the power, I am implacably your enemy."

Like some maimed reptile disappointed of its prey, his former persecutor writhed out of the apartment, and the dying man, exhausted by the emotion of the interview, and the various phases of the excitement he had passed through, sank back half fainting in his chair.

His explanations with his wife and daughter were not the least part of the mortification Mr. Harper was destined that day to endure. On hearing of the marriage of the captain with Lady Selina, the ladies became absolutely ferocious, and indulged in stronger expletives than we think fit to record in our pages.

Having arrived at the end of their vocabulary, the youngest gave way to a passionate burst of tears; not that she ever cared for Augustus, either as a lover or as the godson of a royal duke, but she estimated at its full value the advantage of becoming Lady Mansell, and the possession of an enormous fortune.

"Daniel," said his wife, addressing him by his Christian name, "I insist on your instantly crushing the insolent pride of the Mansells."

"I can't."

"Can't!" ejaculated the lady. "Why, haven't you boasted to me a thousand times that you could hang Sir Jasper? Have you no feeling? I insist upon your hanging him."

"I can't," repeated her husband.

"Ridiculous! Haven't I seen the proofs?"

"I have given them up."

Mr. Harper did not add in exchange for what.

"Impossible! you have never been that fool!"

"He checkmated me, my dear, and if you value my safety—or, what is more precious, my fortune—the less you allude to the subject for the future, the better."

With this observation he quitted the room, unwilling to listen to the reproaches, or answer the torrent of questions that would have followed.

"Married, mamma!" sobbed the daughter; "I shall be the laughing-stock of the City."

At this suggestion Mrs. Harper turned very red in the face.

"How Lady Mansell and Georgianna will triumph!"

"My poor child!"

"One comfort, I never cared for him."

"Of course not, my love," said the mother; "a vain puppy!"

"Heartless!"

"Empty-headed!"

"Ignorant!"

"Conceited!"

"Unprincipled!"

"Vulgar!"

With these and similar expletives mother and daughter summed up the character of the man whom, but half an hour previously, they were so anxious to secure as a son-in-law and a husband.

"Major Count Sabretash is a much handsomer fellow," observed Miss Harper, recovering her breath; "and he has been very particular in his attentions to me of late."

"Fie, my love! Attentions! and you engaged, too!"

"Pretty engagement!" replied the young lady, pettishly. "The major waltzes divinely. I shall go to the company's ball to-night, and dance with him if he asks me."

"You forget the major has no fortune," objected the prudent mother.

"No, I don't."

"And is a foreigner," added the matron. "To be sure, the count is noble."

"He is something better than that," said the disappointed young lady, lowering her voice. "Young Tuft, who met him in Germany, assures me that he was the best shot in the Prussian army—has killed five or six of his brother officers in duels."

The speakers regarded each other for several instants without speaking.

"Do as you please, my love," said Mrs. Harper, kissing her daughter on the forehead. "Go to the ball if you like. You must have some amusement."

"And dance with the major?"

"Why—yes," answered the mother, deliberately. "I did not know he was so celebrated a shot, and a count, too! Dance with him as frequently as you please; but, remember, nothing beyond a little harmless flirtation—no engagement!"

"Never fear, mamma," exclaimed the prudent but vindictive daughter; "I am not such a fool as to marry a poor man."

Her mother kissed her again, and the conversation ended without any further explanation. Doubtless they understood each other.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

> And but to speaken of her conscience,
> She was so charitable and so piteous,
> She would weep on that she but saw a mouse
> Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bled. CHAUCER.

The hour was late when Thief Wilton quitted the "Flower-in-Hand" with his new apprentice, as he was pleased to call him. Like most beasts of prey, he preferred the night to travel by; it not only afforded less chance of recognition, but occasionally gave him an opportunity of practising those peculiar branches of industry which first introduced him to the landlord in the Mint, and obtained for him the cognomen by which he was generally known.

"Jump in," he exclaimed to Telbin, before seating himself in front of the small light van in which he travelled, "and take your rug with you."

This was the one the money-lender had left behind him.

The poor dwarf obeyed without one word of remonstrance or thought of resistance; not that he lacked courage—on the contrary, he was naturally passionate and impulsive—but the thought of Clara's abandoning him, and the effects of the fever still lingering in his constitution, had completely broken his spirit. Bitterly and deeply did the poor youth feel the humiliation of his position. The events of the day had made him reckless of life, and he could almost have welcomed the chance that deprived him of it.

He threw himself into one corner of the moving prison, every shutter of which was closed, and concealing his person in the rug, yielded to sad and painful reflections, which soon completely overcame him, and despite his pretensions to manhood, he wept bitterly.

"Who is den dare?" exclaimed a shrill voice near him.

Although in utter darkness, Telbin was aware there were others beside himself in the vehicle. He had heard their breathing.

"Why not you answer? what make you cry so?"

Still he made no reply.

"Him dumb, her tink, Missie Zitta."

"He is in sorrow," replied the person last addressed, in tones so low and musical, so full of sympathy and human feeling, that they thrilled through the very heart of the poor dwarf, and instead of restraining his tears, caused them to flow the ......

"I sorrow too," observed the former; "you sorrow—eberybody sorrow in dis bad world, but Master Wilton; him nebber feel anyting, unless him pocket or belly empty."

"Silence!" said her companion, entreatingly.

"As her please, Missie Zitta—as her please. Soukey no want to talk when disagreeable."

The speakers were evidently females; but it was not till the van had passed through the City, and entered upon the great North road, when one of them lit a lamp at the back of the carriage, that Telbin was enabled to distinguish their features.

One of them, as our readers doubtless already have surmised, proved to be a black girl. She had wondrously large eyes, which, when excited, flashed like those of some wild animal; woolly hair, and teeth that might have been envied by a duchess. Although only eighteen years of age, she appeared much older, in consequence of her fully-developed figure, broad shoulders, and muscular arms. At the small towns and villages where Wilton exhibited, he described her as the untamable, wild huntress, from the coast of Guinea, and wild enough she was, in all conscience. In her fits of excitement, Zitta was the only person who exercised the slightest control over her; she could govern her like a child.

The last-named personage—a sparkling, graceful brunette, with hazel eyes, and a profusion of naturally curling, dark hair, that somehow or other would escape from its fastenings, and fall in masses down her well-formed shoulders—was one of those pretty waifs and strays the proprietor of the menagerie had picked up in his travels. No one knew from whence she came or where she belonged; she could not have told herself, being one of those friendless beings the quaint old writers of the Middle Ages named "God's orphans."

Truth to say, she merited the appellation; for her heart was filled with love and charity for all His creatures, animate or inanimate. Birds, insects, flowers, all shared her sympathy and tender solicitude. Many a time the poor, hungry animals owed their food to the entreaties of Zitta, who could not endure to see them suffer. As for the monkeys, they were in a perfect ecstacy of delight whenever they beheld her, expecting a feast of nuts, an apple, or, at the worst, a crust or two of bread; something she was sure to have for them.

Her influence over Soukey had a double advantage. It kept the negress in bounds, and acted as a protection for herself. Like most friendless girls in a similar position, she not unfrequently encountered the coarse, the unfeeling and the sensual; had her ears profaned by offers which brought the blush—modesty's mute protest against the outrage—to her pure cheeks. But woe to the daring villain who attempted to obtain a kiss, if Soukey were in sight or hearing. At the sound of Zitta's voice, she would spring like an angry tigress upon the offender.

Those who had once experienced the weight of her hand never ventured to repeat the rash experiment.

"Why, it quite a boy, missa," exclaimed the negress, grinning from ear to ear, and displaying her matchless set of teeth; "not berry big one, too. Massa Wilton tell he bring a husband for you. Me no beliebe him; he often tell lie, and lub you too much for dat himselph."

"Hush!" whispered her companion, blushing slightly; "you should not repeat such folly. I shall never marry."

"I shall, when her finds black gentleman from her own country," replied Soukey, laughingly, "not afore. Me nebber lub white man; he like old babbo in de cage, he tink too much of himseph."

The assertion that Wilton had taken a caprice—it would be profaning the word to call it love—for the poor girl was correct; he had even offered to marry her (a wife more or less upon his conscience would have added but little to the burden). It was, however, declined, and the devoted attachment of the negress had hitherto protected her from insult.

"I am very sorry to see you so unhappy," said Zitta, soothingly. "Are you ill? Is there anything we can do to alleviate your pain?"

"It is of the mind," answered Telbin, "of the mind."

"I know what that is," continued the girl, with a sigh. "Often in the towns and at the fairs, when I see young ladies who have homes, mothers, brothers, friends, who are tenderly cared for and loved, I feel a sadness steal over me, and ask—wickedly, perhaps—what I have done to be left such an outcast."

"You are right," exclaimed the dwarf, "to arraign Providence for the unmerited curse. Some call her mother—she is but a capricious tyrant."

The vehemence with which these words were uttered pleased Soukey, and she laughed and clapped her hands in approval.

"I, too, have questioned her," added the youth, gloomily.

"But I have moments of happiness," observed Zitta; "in the fields, amongst the wild flowers, trees and hedgerows, when listening to the songs of the birds, my heart is light and cheerful; I have no sad thoughts then."

"Her hate fields and birds," shouted the huntress from the coast of Guinea, in her peculiarly shrill voice; "her only lub dem roasted."

"Her!" she grinned again, and exhibited her white teeth with delight at the idea.

"Have you been long with this man?" asked Telbin.

"Three years," was the reply.

"With no home?"

"None that I can distinctly recollect," answered the fair young girl, with a sigh. "Sometimes I dream—yes, yes," she added, musingly, "it can be nothing but a dream."

"And what can you do in a menagerie?"

"Dance on the outside to attract the gazers," said Zitta; "enter the den of the leopardess—play with her—make her jump through a hoop."

"And are you not afraid?"

"I have nothing to fear. Death has no terrors where life has not one hope."

For several days the singularly assorted inmates of the van continued to travel together, avoiding the towns, till they reached the then wild, uncultivated district lying between Manchester and Liverpool, known by the name of Chat-moss, where they found the three caravans which contained the animals, under the charge of their keeper—a hard-featured, one-eyed man, named Peter.

Some said he was Wilton's father, others his partner; but whatever the tie between them, the old man served him faithfully.

"Have you heard when the vessel sails for Cork?" was the first question the master of the menagerie asked him.

"To-morrow night."

"We must start early then."

Peter nodded assent.

The van in which they had travelled was drawn up close to those already upon the ground, and Zitta and the negress sent to a gipsey-like looking tent pitched near them. Telbin would have followed, but Wilton placed his heavy hand upon his shoulder, and drew him back.

"You remain here," he said.

"Alone?"

"What are you afraid of?"

"Nothing," answered the dwarf.

"You are too old, and too much of a man to pass the night under canvas with the girls," said the mountebank; "Peter will be jealous."

The keeper grinned at the jest.

"We shall be near you," added the ruffian; "not that there is any danger."

So saying, he withdrew with his confidant into another wagon adjoining the tent.

Zitta and Soukey had retired too. There was something so unusual in the arrangement, so singular in the look and tone of the speaker since their arrival, that the suspicions of the kind-hearted girl were aroused, and creeping from under the canvas, she listened.

"Nothing can be easier," said Wilton, speaking as coolly as if he were arranging for an exhibition of the menagerie, "than to place the van with the leopardess next the one with the dwarf. By drawing out the slides they become one. I warrant Cora"—the name of the animal—"will give a good account of him."

"But won't it be murder?" observed Peter, doubtfully.

"Accident!" said the ruffian, poking him facetiously in the ribs; "accident, as the coroner's inquest will prove. Then, only to think of the excitement on our landing at Cork—the posters announcing the arrival of the leopardess that devoured the dwarf! Shilling admission; won't look at sixpences for the first three weeks."

"What a head you have!" exclaimed the keeper, with enthusiasm.

"You will do it!"

"Anything to benefit the concern."

Zitta waited to hear no more, but, half dead with terror, retreated to her tent.

She was not the girl to abandon a fellow creature in such danger. Her resolution was as prompt as the means she took to carry it out were intelligent and clear. Peter, she well knew, would not attempt to carry out his atrocious design till the lads who assisted him were asleep. She had still, therefore, several hours before her

Creeping from the tent, she carefully noticed where the two strong Shetland ponies that drew the van with the monkeys were tethered. That done, she crept towards the van where Telbin was to pass the night, and rapped gently at the door.

"Who is there?" demanded the dwarf.

"Do not speak so loudly," said Zitta. "Are you alone?"

"Yes."

"And in bed?"

"Yes."

"Dress yourself quickly. You are in danger. But do not fear."

"I fear nothing," replied the youth, repeating her own words. "Those who have no hope know no fear."

"When I tap again, you must leave the van without speaking a word," continued the kind-hearted girl, "and follow me."

"Wherever you lead," exclaimed the dwarf, "I am willing to accompany you."

"But one caution," added Zitta. "If you hear the side panels opened, wait not an instant, but fly—no matter where—fly for your life, or you will find yourself in presence of a fearful enemy."

"Wilton?"

"Worse—the hungry leopardess."

Telbin uttered an exclamation of horror that alarmed Zitta, who crouched down by the side of the van till assured it had not attracted attention.

It was nearly midnight when the owners of the menagerie entered the little square formed by the wagons, to carry out their infamous design. Zitta, who had been watching them, darted from her tent, where the negress still lay sleeping, and gave the signal.

In a few seconds Telbin was by her side.

"This way," she whispered, breathless with terror; "the ponies are here. Can you ride?"

"I will try," faltered the dwarf, bewildered with the horrible nature of his danger.

"You must," she added, energetically; "it is for your life *and mine.*"

"I can ride," replied the youth, energetically; for the last words gave him a courage he had never known before.

"If overtaken, you must defend yourself," added the heroic girl, placing the long knife used by Peter to cut up the food for the animals in his hand.

With a smaller one she severed the tethers of the Shetland ponies, who, having rested for several days, were fresh and willing, and soon afterwards the two friendless creatures were galloping over the dreary waste of Chat-moss.

When the two murderers approached the wagon which contained the leopardess, they found the hungry animal, which had purposely been left unfed, furious with rage. The odor of the flesh thrown into the other dens had excited her almost to madness.

"Quiet, Cora!" exclaimed Peter; "you shall soon have your fill."

The panels were withdrawn, and the brute, with that cautious stealthiness peculiar to its nature, crept into the van Telbin had so lately quitted.

The keeper and his master both listened; not a sound followed.

"He is not there," muttered the old man, "or Cora would have found him before this; he has escaped."

At the word "escape!" Wilton, who felt the three hundred pounds slipping from his grasp, rushed out of the inclosure. His confidant followed, leaving the slides communicating with the vans both open.

The consequence was that both leopardess and prisoner alike escaped.

After searching the tents and other wagons for the fugitives, the ruffians discovered that Zitta was absent, and calling up the two boys, they started in pursuit of them.

It was a clear, moonlight night, and the fugitives still in sight.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

COMFORTING THE AFFLICTED.

Certain it is, that as nothing can bettter do it, so there is nothing greater, for which God made our tongues, next to reciting his praises, than to minister comfort to a weary soul. And what greater measure can we have, than that we should bring joy to our brother, who with his dreary eyes looks to heaven and round about, and cannot find so much rest as to lay his eyelids close together—than that thy tongue should be tuned with heavenly accents, and make the weary soul listen for light and ease, and, when he perceives that there is such a thing in the world, and in the order of things, as comfort and joy, to begin to break out from the prison of his sorrows, at the door of sighs and tears, and by little and little, melt into showers of refreshment? This is glory to thy voice, and employment fit for the brightest angel. But so have I seen the sun kiss the frozen earth, which was bound up with the images of death, and the colder breath of the north; and then the waters break from their enclosures, and melt with joy, and run in useful channels; and the flies do rise again from their little graves in walls, and dance awhile in the air, to tell that there is joy within, and that the great mother of creatures will open the stock of her new refreshment, become useful to mankind, and sing praises to her Redeemer. So is the heart of a sorrowful man under the discourses of a wise comforter; he breaks from the despairs of the grave, and the fetters and chains of sorrow; he blesses God, and he blesses thee, and he feels his life returning: for to be miserable is death, but nothing is life but to be comforted; and God is pleased with no music from below so much as in the thanksgiving songs of relieved widows, of supported orphans, of rejoicing, and comforted, and thankful persons.

◆

THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT THERE.

"And there shall be *no night* there."

And there will be no need of any, because there is no weariness in Heaven, and there none ever long for darkness to fall so that the heart-ache may be relieved by unseen tears. But what would become of us in *this* world were it not for Night?

Night is all that renders life endurable to half the world. They are able to bear the day, to drive through its heavy-laden hours only by the sure knowledge that night, *blessed* night! draws on.

The keen, hard day—the blazing, blinding, unmerciful day would drive them distracted if it lasted longer than it does; but just as heart and flesh are failing, down rolls the soothing, solemn, shielding night, and all are comforted. The stars come forth and look down, saying nothing to distress. Holy stars, that shine upon your cradle and shine upon your grave, and that watch you all the way between, patiently, mildly, like the eyes of angels. And the moon, sweet, pure moon, that never scorches nor blinds you, calms and cools you with her soft light that falls like consolation on the spirit. When the night has fully come, and wrapped you round, and you go from all harsh, distressing influences that belong to the day, to sit in the moonlight, or the star-light, and commune with God and with your own soul, (that half of it belonging to *your* body, or that half of it belonging to *another* body,)—how many *days*, think you, would it cost to purchase of you that *one* night?

There is melody in the words, "No night there," but well is it for tired and hunted mortals that there is night *here*.

◆

DIGNITY OF HUMAN NATURE.

There is nothing which we contemplate with greater pleasure than the dignity of human nature, which often shows itself in all conditions of life. For, notwithstanding the degeneracy and meanness that is crept into it, there are a thousand occasions in which it breaks through its original corruption, and shows what it once was, and what it will be hereafter. We consider the soul of man as the ruin of a glorious pile of building; where, amidst great heaps of rubbish, you meet with noble fragments of sculpture, broken pillars and obelisks, and a magnificence in confusion. Virtue and wisdom are continually employed in clearing the ruins, removing these disorderly heaps, recovering the noble pieces that lie buried under them, and adjusting them as well as possible according to their ancient symmetry and beauty. A happy education, conversation with the finest spirits, looking abroad into the works of nature, and observations upon mankind, are the great assistances to this necessary and glorious work. But even among those who have never had the happiness of any of these advantages, there are sometimes such exertions of the greatness that is natural to the mind of man, as show capacities and abilities, which only want these accidental helps to fetch them out, and show them a proper light. A plebeian soul is still the ruin of this glorious edifice, though encumbered with all its rubbish.

OLD FOLKS.

BY ALICE CARY.

Ah, don't be sorrowful, darling,
And don't be sorrowful, pray,
Taking th' year together, my dear,
There isn't more night than day!

'Tis rainy weather, my darling,
Time's waves, they heavily run,
But taking the year together, my dear,
There isn't more cloud than sun!

We are old folks now, my darling,
Our heads they are growing gray,
But taking the year all round, my dear,
You will always find th' May!

We have had our May, my darling,
And our roses, long ago,
And th' time of year is coming, my dear,
For th' silent night and th' snow!

And God is God, my darling,
Of night as well as of day,
And we feel and know that we can go
Wherever he leads the way.

Ay God of the night, my darling—
Of th' night of death, so grim;
The gate that leads out of life, good wife,
Is th' gate that leads to Him.

◆

THE PIRATE CAPTAIN.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

A venerable old lady sat rocking herself before a cheerful fire, with her eyes dreamily fixed upon the glowing coals, in which she fancied she saw the familiar faces of by-gone days. Suddenly, over the sunshine of a placid smile, there came a shadow of mingled dread and sorrow, and she muttered, half aloud:

"Ah! what of him? Is he living or dead? Merciful Heaven! what a destiny!"

"Grandma," said a pretty, fair-haired, blue-eyed little girl of ten, who sat at the old lady's feet, busy with her needle, "when are you going to tell me that story about the pirates? You know you promised to tell me some day; and I guess it's about some day now, isn't it?"

"Ah, my little dear," replied the grandmother, rousing up with a start, and fondly stroking down the hair of the child, "it is very strange that I should have been thinking of that man at this very moment!"

"What man, grandma?"

"The pirate captain."

"Oh, do tell me the story! won't you?"

"Well, yes, my darling, I may as well tell you now as any time, for it is not always I care to think about it. But you must let me tell it in my own way:

"First then, when I was about eighteen years of age, a young man, by the name of Walter Crawford, made me an offer of his hand. He was rather good-looking in feature, had a fine, manly figure, was considered quite respectable, and, on the whole, I liked him, though I cannot say I ever had any violent passion for him. But he had for me, at least so he said, and he frankly declared that if he failed to link his fortune with mine, he would be ruined, body and soul. I considered this very extravagant language, and told him so; but he repeated it more than once, and confirmed it with an oath, which I did not like.

"However, my father, for some reason, had taken an utter dislike to young Crawford, and said I should never marry him with his consent, and as I would not wed against his wishes, the affair ended in a dismissal of my passionate suitor, who parted from me in anger, and immediately left for parts unknown.

"Six years after that I married your grandfather, who at that time was master and part owner of a vessel trading between Boston, the West Indies, and different ports around the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. As he continued his vocation for several years after our marriage, I used occasionally to make the voyage with him. Our last voyage was made in the year 1825, and of something that happened then I am now going to tell you.

"At the time I now speak of, the navigation of the Gulfs of Mexico and Bahama, and contiguous waters, was a dangerous business for merchantmen and traders, owing to the hordes of pirates which infested that region. Your grandfather had several narrow escapes, and I was all the time uneasy for fear something would happen to him. When I was with him I was afraid, and when he left me at home I was miserable all the time of his absence.

"Well, one night, when about six hours' sail from Havana, on our last homeward voyage, your grandfather came down to me in the cabin, and reported all going well.

"'A few hours more, my timid wife,' he said, with a cheerful smile, 'and we shall be beyond even the apprehension of danger, and then I trust I shall see you yourself again, for really your dejected, anxious looks are enough to give one the blues.'

"'I wish, for your sake, William, I could be more cheerful,' I replied; 'but when I think of the danger we run, and what we have at stake, I cannot help feeling nervous and frightened.'

"'Well, I cannot blame you, Anna, all things considered; but as this is my last voyage, let us hope your fears will soon be overcome! I will read you a chapter from the Bible, and then turn in, for I am very much fatigued. We have a favorable breeze, and nothing at present to give us any alarm.'

"I felt strangely uneasy, even while he was speaking; but I kept my fears to myself; and taking up the Bible, he began to read a chapter, as was his custom before retiring for the night—for unlike many sea-captains, your grandfather was a religious man. The chapter for this occasion happened to be the Fourth of Job; and he had just finished the words, '*Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?*' when he was suddenly interrupted by the sharp, startling cry:

"'Sail ho!'

"'Where away?' he shouted, as he dropped the book and rushed on deck, leaving me trembling with fear, but somewhat comforted by the sacred words he had just read.

"'Close on our weather beam!' I heard a voice reply.

"There was a quick movement of feet on deck; and while I sat holding my breath with fear, there rung out upon the still air the sharp reports of a volley of musketry, followed by the gruff, savage hail:

"'Ship ahoy!'

"'Hillo!' was the answer.

"'Heave to, and let us send a boat aboard, or we'll riddle you with a broadside, and be —— to you!'

"Then came several quick orders, a hurried tramping of feet on deck, the rattling of cordage, the flapping of sails, and then a death-like silence.

"'Oh, God!' I groaned, covering my face with my hands.

"And then these sublime and beautiful words rung in my ears and strengthened my fainting spirit:

"'*Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?*'

"I heard a step upon the stairs. I looked up and saw your grandfather slowly descending. His knees quivered, and his face was deadly pale. He spoke, but in a quavering tone:

"'Anna, my dear wife,' he said, as he reeled forward and threw his arms around me, "your worst fears are confirmed—we are in the hands of pirates. For myself, I could die like a man; but you! you! oh, my God! *you!*' and sinking heavily upon a seat, he groaned like one in pain.

"It was my turn to be supporter and comforter now—the poor, weak, timid woman was to change places with the strong, courageous man.

"'William,' I said, solemnly and firmly, and feeling a calm, holy thrill of security and protection pass through my late fainting and shrinking frame: 'William, in our hour of trouble, remember the sacred promises of the Lord—*Who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?*'

"'Then none are innocent, and none are righteous,' he replied, gloomily; 'for all perish, the lamb as well as the wolf. It is our turn now. We can scarcely expect these wretches to spare, for they have run up the black flag, and their motto is, *Dead men tell no tales.* There! hark! even now they are boarding us! Oh, my dear wife! it is the thought of you that unnerves and makes a coward of me! I could die bravely if you were dead; but, oh! to leave you behind, to a doom a thousand times worse than death—this is the fear that pierces my very soul! Oh, merciful God! let this cup pass from me!'

"There was now a fearful noise on deck—rough voices, shuffling feet, shouts, and blasphemous oaths. I arose and stood before my husband, firm as a rock—unnaturally calm in that moment of terrible peril.

"Three or four men, frightful looking fellows, armed with pistols and cutlasses, appeared descending the stairs.

"'Ho! ho! what have we here?' said the foremost, in a gruff voice, and with a coarse laugh. 'A woman, as I live! This will be sport for the captain, who always takes the women for a part of his share.'

"'Send your captain here,' said I, with a calm firmness that surprised myself.

"'All in good time, my beauty! You'll see him soon enough. Come, sirrah! you're wanted on deck!' he continued, addressing your grandfather. 'All your lubberly crew are going to walk the plank, and they want you to lead off. Up with you! be lively! for we've got no time to spare!' he added, putting a pistol to your grandfather's head.

"'Will no amount of ransom save our lives?' asked your grandfather.

"'No, we don't do business that way. So up with you, or I'll scatter your brains where you stand, and they might soil the lady's dress!'

"'Farewell, my dear, dear wife,' said your grandfather, in a choking voice, as he threw his arms around my neck and pressed his trembling lips to mine. 'Let your dagger save you from dishonor!' he whispered, as he tore himself away.

"O, my dear child, it was a terrible moment; but still I was calm—unnaturally calm—and the reassuring words of the Lord were still ringing in my ears.

"'Men,' said I, 'you have had mothers and sisters, perhaps sweethearts and wives, and still in your inner hearts must beat some feelings of human sympathy. Oh, by all you hold sacred, I adjure you not to stain your hands with the blood of those who never injured you! but let a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother, appeal to you for mercy! Take all our money and goods if you will, but let us escape with life!'

"'Ho! ho! ho!' laughed the spokesman, who was the second in command; 'you talk like a woman, and all women are fools.'

"'At least then,' rejoined I, 'before you sacrifice any lives, let me see your captain, for I have something to tell him of importance, which may make it to his interest to spare some of your prisoners.'

"'Ay, ay—that's fair enough!' said the man, as he turned and marched your poor grandfather before him to the deck, leaving me alone, but still upheld and sustained by a Superior Power. I knew not what I should say to the pirate captain—it seemed as if I only needed to gain time for something to interpose and save us.

"In a minute or so a quick step descended the stairs, and a voice said, impatiently:

"'What is it, woman? what is it? I am the captain of the pirate, at your service.'

"I was standing with my features in shadow, but the light fell clearly upon his. Years had passed—with him long, bitter years of passion and strife—since I had looked upon that face; but through the heavy beard, the bronze of exposure, the scars of battle, the knitted brow, the merciless eye, the deep furrows of grief, anger, hate and remorse, I recognized the comely youth who had once sued for my hand.

"'Walter Crawford,' said I, 'it is Anna Mervale who stands before you.'

"He started and staggered, as if struck a heavy blow, and then catching hold of me, and turning me to the light, he looked eagerly and wildly into my face.

"'Gracious God!' he cried, sinking down upon a seat, and burying his face in his hands.

"'Walter Crawford,' said I, 'I will not say I ever loved you, but for long, long years, as a maid, a wife, and a mother—I have prayed for your happiness. My husband commands this vessel. He and I, and nearly all we possess, are now in your power. Will you save or destroy us? Shall our prayers go up to Heaven for your salvation, or shall our spirits appear at the Judgment Seat against you?'

"He groaned and sobbed like a child.

"'Oh, Anna,' he replied, 'I told you your rejection would destroy me, body and soul!'

"'No, Walter Crawford! if you are destroyed, body and soul, it will be by your own evil deeds. No disappointment can be an excuse for crime. What a life is this: Quit it, repent, reform, and be saved!'

"'It is too late!' he groaned, starting up and pacing hurriedly and unsteadily to and fro. 'And we meet thus! Oh, my God! my God!'

"'Will you save or destroy us?' said I, calmly.

"For nearly a minute he did not reply, during which period he must have undergone an age of torture. Then he turned and grasped my hand, presenting the most haggard, wretched, wobegone countenance I ever beheld.

"'Farewell!' he gasped, 'farewell forever!'

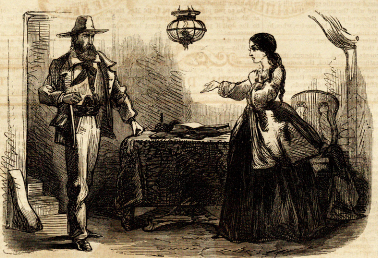
"He turned, reeled, and rushed on deck. Then I heard hurried orders and hurried movements. Spellbound, I was standing like one in a trance, when your grandfather rushed down, clasped me in his arms, and exclaimed:

"'My dear, dearest Anna, what magic is this? The pirates are gone, and we are saved.'

"I could not reply. Nature, which had done so much, could not sustain me against the rush of this new and happy emotion. I pointed to the open Bible, and fainted upon his breast.

"We were saved indeed; we reached home in safety.

"Long, long years have passed since then, my child—your grandfather sleeps in his grave, but I still live, and still pray that God will pardon that man of sin and crime who dates his ruin from his love of me."



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I WILL NOT GIVE MY HEART AWAY.

I will not give my heart away!
I am too proud, I don't deny it;
And so, whatever you may say,
I will not give it—you must buy it!
It is not gold—it is not land—
Nor name, nor fame, nor high degree;
But if, indeed, you wish my hand,
I'll tell you what the price shall be!

And first, the House,—I'd have it good;
And furnished nobly, of the best!—
Its inward worth well understood,
Its soundness equal to the test!
I'd have it warm in every part;
In every trial, firm as well;
If that House is to be your Heart,
And in that Heart I am to dwell!

Oh, some with *counterfeits* will try,
Before with Love's true gold they'll part;
They think, but once deceive the eye,
'Tis easy to deceive the heart!
But with no counterfeits, though new,
And bravely gilt, will I be caught;
Though glittering brighter than the true,
With no such coin will I be bought.

Give me the heart that's rich in worth,
Although in worldly riches poor;
The want of fortune upon earth
Is not the worst want we endure!
The want of feeling—temper—trust
The want of truth, when hearts are sought,
Gold, *linked to these*, is worse than dust;
With no such gold will I be bought.

No: 'tis not gold—it is not land—
Nor name, nor fame, nor high degree;
But if, indeed, you wish my hand,
I've told you what the price shall be.

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THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.----No. 96.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

FAIRY MUSIC.

A musquito has an intense individuality. Others of insects there are that love plunder, that will shed blood to secure their ends, that are prowlers in the night. But this only of all these adventurers commits indecent depredations under the color of the *Fine Arts.*

Gnats, fleas, bed-bugs, chiggers, and other things that shall be nameless, make a business of supplying their hunger, without refinement, without the accompaniments of conversation, or any refinements whatsoever. It is mere appetite. But a musquito will not gorge himself for the sake of eating. He first offers you a song. He will exhibit you many feats of dexterity. He is a good gymnast and nimble enough. Your first intimation of his presence is the finest of audible sounds, as if he had strung a gossamer upon his violin, and was sounding the scale far up in those tones which end the earthly scale and join on to the ethereal sounds too fine for gross mortal ears. It draws nearer. It is not a dull monotone. His swift flight and a habit of excursion gives to his music the variable and intermitting effects noticed in an Æolian harp—now loud, now soft, now near, and now far distant. It is this variety, among other things, that gives such effect to his music. Many persons that do not listen to common music, listen instantly whenever they hear his. Persons without any natural musical ear can detect to a nicety every note of this airy musician, and often he sets them to beating time for him.

Some have supposed that the musquito was of a devout turn, and never would partake of a meal without saying a "*grace:*" but, that can hardly be, so *long* is the ceremony, unless he be imagined a puritan, addicted to excessive length of service. Others suppose him a *gallant*, out on a serenade, singing gaily to some fair one; or some roysterer returning home from too convivial a meeting, and singing ditties and snatches as he goes. But, no one who will examine this gentle creature can hold these theories. He is of a spare habit, indicating temperate habits. He is spare and slender, and may be a little vain of his figure, but, the sober gray of his dress shows that he is not a vain beau.

I am, upon profound meditation, satisfied that the mosquito has a natural voice; that, like the *nightingale* and the *whipoorwill*, he sings of preference at night; and that, blood sucking is but an accident, while the *fine arts* are the true aim of his being. The great populous world of musquitoes never touch meats. They are born to vegetable juices. They are a refined and tiny species of vegetarians.

We all know that a musquito is born in the water. He is not of a turbulent disposition, and does not affect unquiet waters, but still pools and stagnant reservoirs. Here he first appears as a horizontal wriggle. Shortly he mounts to the surface, to see if he can in some way get ashore. In lack of a better means, he strips off his skin, tucks it under him as a float, pulls out from their folds a nice pair of wings, for which he had no use when under water, and holds them up to dry in the sun. This is the crisis of his being. Before he got at his wings, before he stript off his water-proof garments, he was nowhere so much at home as in the water. But now, while he is sailing on its surface with his skin-boat under him, should a puff of wind upset him, all is over. The element that nourished him an hour before would now drown him. His whole success in life depends upon a still and dry hour, in which to get his legs stretched and his wings ironed out. But once let him rise, and now "the world is all before him where to choose!" His first preference, next, of course, to music, is vegetable juice. He banquets on the sap of tender herbaceous stems. He seeks the shadows of underbrush, of weedy nooks, of forests, and here, for the most part, they pass their tranquil lives in airy music.

As there are some adventurers even in the most moral societies, so there are some restless musquitoes, who disdain advice, breaking from the traditions and customs of the fathers, and wander into bye and forbidden paths. Such enter houses without leave, go without knocking into chambers, and spy out other people's business. But, even then, a musquito cannot forgot the elegance of his native tastes. His flute, if it be flute that he blows, or viol, if it be stringed music that we nightly hear, is his constant companion. Some rude and indiscriminating people have called him the pirate of the night. When ever did a pirate preface his deeds of blood with music? No. Our own impression is, that the musquito comes on a serenading errand. He brings you music. It is benevolence, it is a love of harmonious numbers, that inspire him. And yet old harpers, after their strains, expected a full cup of ruby wine. And our tiny singer, being thirsty, alights upon the first succulent thing to slake his thirst. But that is a mere accident. That, after drawing blood, they may be perverted, I do not deny. There is much blood in the world that would turn the head of stronger things than musquitoes.

But, my dear Mr. Bonner, musquitoes cannot be treated fitly without some allusion to the conduct of persons visited by them. Admit that they are disagreeable; what do you think *they* would say of *us*, were they to write for the LEDGER? Let my next take up this subject again. Do you object to musquitoes in the LEDGER?

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Harvard.—It is not possible to give a complete description of the Armstrong gun in a short paragraph; but we will mention some particulars in which it differs from the ordinary cannon. The Armstrong gun is an improved rifled cannon, invented by Sir William Armstrong in 1854. It is wholly composed of wrought iron, used in the form of spiral tubes, which being welded together form the barrel of the gun. The lower half of the barrel is made exceedingly thick, for it is there that the pressure is greatest. The ball is a very thin cast-iron shell, coated with lead, the interior of which is curiously strengthened by forty-two cast iron supports, leaving in the middle a small chamber for the bursting charge. This ball, which may be used as a shell or as a solid projectile, is so constructed that an ounce of powder is sufficient to explode it; and yet, when used without a charge, it will penetrate six feet of oak timber, or four inches of wrought iron. The shell is charged in a moment by merely inserting a prepared tube or cartridge, and adjusting the fuse. It can be used as canister or grape, if desired, by causing the charge to explode at the instant the shell leaves the gun. If the shell bursts in the midst of a group of men, the destruction of life would be very great, since it has been ascertained by experiment that an ounce of powder will break the shell into more than two hundred pieces. The greatest distance to which a ball has been thrown by an Armstrong gun is five miles and a quarter, a distance that has been surpassed by the Whitworth gun, which has thrown a ball five miles and a half. In every part of the Armstrong gun there are improvements over the old methods, particularly in the mode of firing and aiming. The aim can be wonderfully accurate, even at the distance of five miles. The Whitworth gun is pronounced by some authorities to be superior even to the Armstrong. Both of these guns are loaded at the breech. The Whitworth bore is hexagonal, and the ball is elongated.

A Rich Young Lady, as she announces herself to be, says "she *thinks* she is falling in love, and that the sensations, though giddy, are delightful." But she isn't *certain* that it *is* love, and so she would like a description of "*a young and growing love*," so she "may set her heart at rest, at least on *that* point." We submit, as a prescription for your case, the following lines by Charles Lamb, descriptive of the growth of a young love, which, we should think, will answer your purpose very well:

"Ah! I remember well (and how can I
But evermore remember well) when first
Our flame began, when scarce we knew what was
The flame we felt; when, as we sat and sighed,
And looked upon each other, and conceived—
Not what we ailed—yet something we did ail;
And yet were well, and yet we were not well,
And what was our disease we could not tell.
Then would we kiss, then sigh, then look, and thus
In that first garden of our simpleness
We spent our childhood. But when years began
To reap the fruit of knowledge, ah, how then
Would she with graver looks, with sweet stern brow
Check my presumption and my forwardness;
Yet still would give me flowers, still would me show
What she would have me, yet not have me know."

Military.—The difference between a fort and a fortress is chiefly one of magnitude. A fortress is a permanently fortified place of great extent, like the fortress of Gibraltar and Fortress Monroe. A fort is a single fortified structure, like Fort Columbus, Fort Lafayette, and Fort McHenry. Fortress Monroe, as you are probably aware, encloses a tract of about seventy acres, and contains a large number of buildings, as well as a fine grove of trees, a spacious parade ground, and several gardens. If it were necessary, an army of a hundred thousand men could find temporary accommodation within its walls.

Libbie.—You complain that a gentleman calls on you, whom you do not wish even to see, whenever he chooses to do so. We are at a loss to conceive how such a thing can be. Why do you see him when he calls? Why not refuse him entrance to the house, as you ought to do, under such circumstances? A lady must have very little dignity or firmness to permit such repeated and insulting intrusions.

Perplexity.—You ask our opinion on a certain affair in which you were lately concerned. We have only to say that although your motives may be very good and innocent, yet such a friendship as you speak of is not proper between a young man who is almost a stranger and a married lady; certainly not without the knowledge and consent of the husband.

Consoler.—We should think that if a young lady had invited you to wait upon her home from church and had afterward accepted the attentions of another gentleman, that your best course would be to leave her for the future to his care.

X. L.—The fact that your complexion has suddenly become very yellow indicates that you are probably bilious and take too little exercise, or drink prodigiously strong coffee.

Burlington.—Captain Marryat, whose works you are so fond of reading, was born in London in 1792. He was the son of Joseph Marryat, a great West India merchant and member of Parliament. Entering the navy in 1806, as midshipman, he continued in active service about thirty years, rising to the rank of post captain, and he would have been made an admiral had he not offended the Sailor King, William IV., (who was a fool like all the rest of his family,) by his free comments upon the management of the navy. The exploits of Captain Marryat while he was in the navy, were as brilliant as any that he has described in his novels. He was in fifty engagements under Lord Cochrane, who gave him honorable mention in his dispatches. Once he was trampled upon and left for dead on an enemy's deck. Four times he saved men from drowning by leaping into the sea and rescuing them. Once he saved his ship by his skill and courage. He served in the campaign against New Orleans in 1814, and from 1815 to the death of Napoleon commanded a sloop of eighteen guns off the island of St. Helena. It was Marryat who brought to England the news of the emperor's death. He was afterwards employed in the East Indies, where his gallantry twice elicited the public thanks of the Governor-General. Returning home in 1828, he was promoted, and appointed to the command of a channel frigate. And then it was that he wrote his first novel, Frank Mildmay, the success of which led to his literary career. His novels are twenty in number, but not more than half of these are worthy of his talents. He was married, and became the father of six children, of whom the eldest son entered the navy and rose to the rank of lieutenant, when he perished by shipwreck. Capt. Marryat died in 1848, aged 56. He was, as our correspondent conjectures, a pleasant and jovial companion, as well as an honorable, gallant, and skillful officer. The Code of Signals invented by him is still used in the English navy.

Perry.—What punishment is proper for a boy of nineteen who remains out late every night, and whose mother has to open the door for him? His father should *make* him come home at a stated hour, or else not let him go out at all, if he has the moral or physical power so to control his son; if not, the parents of that boy should notify him that their door would be locked at ten o'clock every evening, and that after that hour it would not be opened to him until the next morning. Having given him this notification, nothing will remain for them but to carry it out unflinchingly. A young fellow who is willing to keep his mother up to an unreasonable hour to let him in, is a low-bred, mean-spirited person, just fit to be left out in the cold these November nights. For such people kennels should be provided, not houses. Upon young men of that description mothers may have mercy, but the LEDGER has nothing for them but abhorrence and contempt.

Mrs. J. F.—You country people know nothing about poverty or poor folks, in comparison with the knowledge and acquaintance therewith of the inhabitants of cities. You seem to think that our rich ladies and gentlemen have no use *here* for their cast-off clothes, and so suggest that they send them into the country. Why, Madam, you would stand dumb with wonder and amazement could you see the amount of clothing, both cast-off and new, that the inhabitants of this city devote to charitable purposes in one single month. It would clothe pretty comfortably about the entire population of your State. Charity is reduced to a science here, and is practiced on a scale which is truly sublime.

Afflicted Wife.—Your case is truly an unpleasant one, and your statement excites sympathy, but it would be useless to place your appeal before those who are entire strangers to you. Every man has ways enough, and more than enough, to bestow what he can give in charity to his fellow-creatures, among those whom he knows or who are brought to his notice by persons in whose word he has confidence. You should look for assistance among your own circle of acquaintances, and certainly within your own village, and not send your eleemosynary appeals off hundreds of miles to strangers, who can have no means of knowing whether you are deserving of assistance or not.

Amelia wants to know what we think of the conduct of a young lady, estimable in mind and character, who, against the remonstrances of her friends, continues a correspondence with a married man, who was her lover before he was married, in years gone by?. There can be no question of the impropriety of this course, as it regards the young lady herself, and the wife of the gentleman whom she so greatly injures. How would *she* like another woman to correspond clandestinely with a husband of hers, whom she dearly loved, as you say the wife of the man referred to loves *her* husband?

Grof.—A young German, several years in this country, is getting melancholy on account of not having friends to introduce him to the society of respectable families. That is a pity, when there are so many single ladies who would welcome the advent of respectable gallants. Could not the pastor of your church introduce you, through the "Sewing Circles" of his parish, to some estimable ladies?

Gertrude.—With regard to the question whether gentlemen who wait upon ladies should oblige them in their requests, we can only say, that as a gentleman's object in waiting upon ladies is supposed to be to gratify their wishes with as much gallantry as possible, if he does not feel inclined to do so, he had better not wait upon them, but allow them the society of gentlemen who are less selfish.

D. McC.—Do you not remember that Alma Elverton was kept in by her mother on the evening that she had appointed to meet her father and lover at the same place, and so escaped (though much against her will) the trouble that she anticipated from that double appointment? The authoress of "Eudora" does not make such mistakes as ou erroneously suppose her to have made in this case.

Y. L.—If a gentleman accompany a young lady home from any place of amusement, she should *not* "invite him in, without regard to the hour." The hours are late at which city places of amusement terminate, and it is best to bid good night at the door. Nor will any well-bred young man object to a course of conduct that is so obviously proper in a young girl.

A Young Lady.—Upon entering a room where there is a small party of ladies and gentlemen, it is customary to salute the company before sitting down. A polite inclination of the head to all, is sufficient, unless indeed there is some particular person who by reason of age or position, has a particular demand upon your special recognition.

Old Subscriber.—We have little personal knowledge of the value of old coins. We should suppose, however, that the value of a cent coined in 1812 was a cent, and no more. There are several worthy women near our office who will gladly give you in exchange for it a small apple, or a penny's worth of peanuts.

Wilmington.—William Cullen Bryant is the author of the noble lines respecting which you inquire. The whole stanza is as follows:

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers;
But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies among her worshippers."

Ivese.—We have often said, and we repeat it, that in case of any misunderstanding between lovers, the best way is to meet by agreement and talk the matter thoroughly over. Many a life-long heart-ache may be prevented by this simple method.

E. W.—You can, of course, resort to stratagem to get possession of your picture, now in the hands of a lover whom you have found to be unworthy; but a better way would be to put the affair in the hands of some gentleman relative.

Carl.—At a ball, you received a marked neglect from two ladies, to whom you had always been as a brother. Very well; you should cease being a brother or anything else to young ladies who have no better ideas of propriety than it seems they had.

N. M. G.—We do not believe in that kind of Christianity that prompts or permits a child to speak of its parents as "sinners." Sinners they may be, but *you* are not the person to call them such.

Kate.—If you are wise, you will not use arsenic as a beautifier of the complexion. Its fatal effects are well known. Good health is the only thing that can be the permanent foundation of good looks.

Hamlet.—A lady who is a perfect stranger, and yet who would talk with you half an hour in the street, and smile whenever she met you, cannot be the right sort of an acquaintance for any young man.

H. S. M.—You need never be ashamed of a virtuous love for a virtuous woman. Let your friends "plague you," if they will. Such a love has been the means of saving many a man from utter ruin.

Fair Play.—Of course we answer New York correspondents. It makes no difference from whence questions come to us; if they are proper questions, we always answer them.

Will.—If you are doubtful whether your means are sufficient to warrant marriage, you should submit it to the lady and her friends, and be guided by them.

J. McQ.—Congress, at the extra session, made no provision for filling the vacancies at West Point; but, we presume, that will be done early in the coming session.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*